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ABSTRACT

Experts testifying at the National Nutrition Policy study hearings on June 19-21, 1974 in Washington, at the invitation of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, recommended several steps which the committee staff feel merit a prompt Congressional response. This report prepared by staff incorporates those recommendations, focusing on the need for: (1) creation of a Federal Food and Nutrition Office; (2) formalizing nutrition policy making into a written National Nutrition Plan; and (3) implementation of a better system of National Nutrition Surveillance. Members of the Nutrition Committee submitted legislation for improved nutrition education during the ninety-third Congress, and those recommendations are therefore only treated briefly in this report. A comprehensive National Nutrition Policy is necessary to coordinate and monitor the varied nutrition-related programs and activities now dispersed throughout the government. The present global food situation threatens millions overseas with starvation and requires immediate concerted action. The present lack of policy coordination derives from the multidimensional character of nutrition. Agricultural policy, tax policy, and even foreign policy all have nutritional implications. The flow of information to decision makers in a form they can use must be coordinated. (Author/JM)

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TOWARDS A NATIONAL NUTRITION POLICY

NUTRITION AND GOVERNMENT

PREPARED BY THE STAFF OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND HUMAN NEEDS UNITED STATES SENATE

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NATIONAL NUTRITION POLICY STUDY HEARINGS:

Part 1—Famine and the World Situation, June 14, 1974.
Part 2—Nutrition and the International Situation, June 19, 1974.
Part 2A—Appendix to Nutrition and the International Situation.
Part 3—Nutrition and Special Groups, June 19, 1974.
Part 3A—Appendix to Nutrition and Special Groups.
Part 4—Nutrition and Food Availability, June 20, 1974.
Part 4A—Appendix to Nutrition and Food Availability.
Part 5—Nutrition and the Consumer, June 20, 1974.
Part 5A—Appendix to Nutrition and the Consumer.
Part 6—Nutrition and Health, June 21, 1974.
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PREFACE

We still need a Federal Food and Nutrition Office. The White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health recommended such an office more than 5 years ago. Subsequent events have strongly reaffirmed the importance of assigning responsibility to a single Federal agency:

(1). Global food consumption has outstripped production in each of the last 5 years; some regions of the world are already suffering famine.

(2). Rising food prices and even shortages are adversely affecting the American family; our national diet is undergoing possible permanent changes with nutritional consequences we cannot yet foresee with any precision.

(3). In addition to problems caused by the scarcity or the cost of food there are also serious health problems which appear related to excessive food consumption. In the United States these include heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis and others.

(4). It is becoming increasingly clear that nutrition policy is inextricably linked to the agricultural marketplace, the energy crisis, foreign policy and international economics, as well as domestic policy conflicts which existing interdepartmental coordinating mechanisms may be institutionally unsuited to resolve.

(5). These problems are likely to get worse before they get better, and there is evidence they may persist for the foreseeable future.

We cannot continue to operate on the assumption that the increasingly complex threads affecting nutrition policy will automatically weave themselves together into a coherent plan. There is no invisible seamstress repairing the rents in our social fabric caused by rising food prices, or patching holes in our national economy caused by commodity shortages. To believe such a fantasy is just another way of rationalizing irresponsible government.

We are no longer a nation of subsistance farmers. We rely on the orderly workings of the nation's largest industry--the food industry--in order to eat. Only a comprehensive government

policy can guarantee that this system operates effectively. We expect government, through its agricultural policies, to assure the availability of an adequate food supply. We have the right to demand that the food we purchase be clean, nutritious, accurately weighed and labeled as well as wholesome. Only coordination of interdepartmental regulatory and investigative activities can assure that this is so.

Recommendations of Panel on Nutrition and Government

The following is a report by the staff of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs based primarily on testimony presented to the Panel on Nutrition and Government during 3 days of hearings on National Nutrition Policy before the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs during June 1974. Witness after witness told the same story: Present policy lacks focus and direction; change in organization of Federal programs is necessary to alleviate serious defects in nutrition policy planning. The panel, as early conferences had done, endorsed the concept of a Federal Food and Nutrition Office.

Many witnesses at the hearings asserted that administration policy is dangerously myopic. Nutrition is treated as a neglected stepchild of income maintenance programs which themselves are woefully inadequate. This narrow concept virtually denies the nutrition dimension in comprehensive health care, or even that nutrition is a health issue. This parochial view ignores disturbing questions about misleading food advertising and other issues totally unrelated to income inequality. It fails to grapple with the reality that even wealthy Americans are often nutritionally illiterate, and that arteriosclerosis and other diseases associated with the aging process affect more than the poor. These and other issues germane to the health and well-being of the American people go far beyong the perils of poverty, and require a much broader Federal concept of the nation's nutritional policy requirements.

Federal Programs

It is regrettable that we are no closer to a comprehensive nutrition policy today than we were 5 years ago, we cannot discount the progress made in the interim.

The Food Stamp Program is no longer an experiment. It works. Whereas only 3 million people were receiving this assistance in 1969, more than 18 million people are now beneficiaries--an increase of 500 percent in 5 years.

The reduced-price and free components of the National School Lunch Program is also a singular success. These lunches now assure 9 million children at least one balanced meal per day. In 1969 the figure was only half as large.

We also have programs which did not even exist in 1969. The most vital is known as WIC—for pregnant women, infants and small children, whose diet it supplements. As of 1974, 89,000 were utilizing the program in any given month, with 144,000

infants and nearly 200,000 small children also receiving dietary assistance. The program thus measurably reduces the possibility of brain damage during the vital growth period from conception through the age of 4 for many Americans hitherto vulnerable to permanent harm.

Agenda for Action

Much remains to be done. Many Americans suffer from inadequate diets because they do not realize that there are programs to help them. Others, often with as great a need, are not eligible for existing programs. Furthermore, none of our present efforts deal comprehensively with the global food emergency.

The present lack of policy coordination exacerbates internal conflicts within the administration over priorities. This year's debate over whether the United States should support a World Grain Reserve is an example. One can understand how the Secretary of State might disagree with the Secretary of Agriculture on such an important matter. But it is difficult to believe that such differences could not be subordinated to a single national policy by the President.

Clearly we must bring the separate strands of nutrition policy together in an independent office with direct access to the President. The new office would advise the President as to the nutritional state of the union on a regular basis, formulate a unified interdepartmental National Nutrition Plan and coordinate existing nutrition-related programs throughout the Government in terms of this unified policy.

This concept represents a major departure from conventional attempts to institutionalize programs or policies. It focuses on the real problem--coordination of the flow of information to decisionmakers in a form they can use--rather than on the illusion that creating a new Federal agency will automatically solve complex, tangled issues. This proposal will not insure an effective National Nutrition Policy--it will only facilitate one. There is no legislative substitute for concern or commitment on the part of the Executive Branch of government.

This new Federal Food and Nutrition Office would not centralize program administration. Existing programs would continue as part of line agencies. But the new office would insure that activities of various departments administering programs were consistent with the National Nutrition Plan.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the National Nutrition Consortium, Inc., whose report "Guidelines for a National Nutrition Policy" was instrumental in developing our concept of a National Nutrition Office and National Nutrition Policy and Planning as presented in this report.

George McGovern, Chairman
May 1, 1975

SUMMARY

It's time for a comprehensive National Nutrition Policy. Such a policy is necessary to coordinate and monitor the varied nutrition-related programs and activities now dispersed throughout the government. The present global food situation threatens millions overseas with starvation, and requires immediate concerted action.

The present lack of policy coordination derives from the multidimensional character of nutrition. Agricultural policy, tax policy and even foreign policy all have nutritional implications. Cabinet officers can be excused for giving primacy to their own concerns, but without some centralized responsible agency coordinating the nutritional implications of governmental activities, the present lack of coordination is certain to persist.

Experts testifying at the National Nutrition Policy Study hearings on June 19-21, 1974, in Washington, at the invitation of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, recommended several steps which the Committee staff feel merit a prompt Congressional response. This report prepared by the staff incorporates those recommendations, focusing on the need for: (1) creation of a Federal Food and Nutrition Office; (2) formalizing nutrition policy-making into a written National Nutrition Plan; and, (3) implementation of a better system of National Nutritional Surveillance. Members of the Nutrition Committee submitted legislation for improved nutrition education during the 93rd Congress and those recommendations are therefore only treated briefly in this report.

National Nutrition Planning

Present national nutrition planning is parochial and distorted. Until now the federal effort has consisted of piecemeal programs generally tied to the interests of the food industry, corporate farming, grain traders, or other special interests. This parochial focus, of course, was episodically interrupted by temporary concern with overseas famine or domestic hunger.

Nutrition research for example, has suffered from this policy. Federally funded nutrition program priorities have shifted in recent decades away from basic research in human metabolism or the identification of unknown nutrients towards income maintenance which now dominates national nutrition policy at the federal level. Research now plays a relatively minor role in national policy compared to such direct feeding efforts as the National School Lunch Program, or income maintenance via Food Stamps.

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This is not to denigrate the crucial role of income maintenance programs in any national nutrition plan. But in the present budget all nutrition policy goals are classified under this single heading. The health dimension of nutrition appears to have been left out of present planning, while nutrition education has been relegated to the status of a secondary concern. Without disparaging existing programs, this approach clearly leaves large gaps.

In the view of the Committee staff, the remedy for this piecemeal approach is development of a comprehensive National Nutrition Plan (N.N.P.). To insure accountability the Plan should be a written document. To insure review this document should be submitted to the Legislative Branch at the beginning of each Congress. The N.N.P. should include a formal assessment of the "nutritional state of the union" in terms of the best available current indices of national nutritional status

The National Nutrition Plan should be articulated in terms of specific goals. These goals should address the following concerns:

Maintenance and improvement of the health of the American people;

Insuring adequate food production for domestic needs and global commitments;

Maintenance of food quality;

Guaranteeing accessibility to food supplies; and

Maintaining freedom of choice as an essential feature of U.S. food distribution and allocation.

The N.N.P. must be framed in a manner compatible with effective program evaluation. This means, at a minimum, that specific implementing objectives are required for each general goal of the Plan. Provision should also be made to monitor implementation.

The staff believes that establishing a National Nutrition Plan is compatible with continued local efforts by the States, or municipalities. Provision should be made in the national plan for rapid dissemination of data collected by the Federal Government to the States and for facilitating cooperation among the States.

The proposed National Nutrition Plan would not represent the views of the proposed Federal Nutrition Office as to what the N.N.P. ought to be, but rather what it is already, in terms of planned government activities. In this sense, there already is a national nutrition plan, but it is not integrated into one document so that it can be reviewed for consistency, balance and reasonableness.

Integrating the plan into a single document will likely have the effect of improving it, since it will be a readily reviewable standard to measure the effort of any particular administration. This process should be a progressive

evolutionary one that leads to the best possible national nutrition plan.

The basic concept is to have each agency submit nutrition-related budgetary and legislative proposals as well as continuing program plans for nutrition activities to the Federal Food and Nutrition Office as part of the regular planning and budgetary process. As an agency develops its proposals to submit to the Office of Management and Budget for incorporation into the President's annual budget message those objectives or activities with nutritional implications will be "tagged" and compared with nutrition-related objectives of other federal agencies. This totality of objectives, placed in a single document, is the National Nutrition Plan.

This formal process of integration of related objectives into a single document is designed to facilitate development of an integrated, mutually reinforcing national nutrition policy. The Federal Food and Nutrition Office, by putting together this document will be forcing agencies and departments to confront conflicts in goals which have an adverse nutritional impact.

The agency is not intended as a new department, or even a first step towards a new department. The sole power of the agency, except possibly a limited ability to delay implementation of proposed regulations having an adverse nutritional impact, is control over information. The Federal Nutrition Office will not tell agencies how to run their programs. It will simply remind them--and the Congress--whenever their programs have an adverse nutritional impact.

Organization of the Federal Effort

To implement the National Nutrition Plan a Federal Food and Nutrition Office (F.F.N.O.) should be established. Such an office was first recommended by the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health. The National Nutrition Consortium reiterated this recommendation in 1974, and the Panel on Nutrition and Government endorsed the recommendation at the National Nutrition Policy Study hearings in June 1974.

In the view of the Committee staff, a formal National Nutrition Plan will remain an empty commitment unless a specific federal office assumes responsibility for implementing it. If this is to happen, organizational changes are necessary, and the concept of a single Federal Food and Nutrition Office appears to be the best vehicle for insuring visibility, accountability and access.

The new office would not administer nutrition-related programs. It would be responsible for coordination rather than day-to-day supervision. The F.F.N.O. would, however, monitor nutrition programs throughout the government in terms of N.N.P. goals and objectives. The new agency would also have direct responsibility for providing the President and the Congress with definitive interpretation of data collected as part of the national nutrition surveillance effort.

The issue of advance approval by the new Federal Nutrition Office for any major changes in program guidelines or regulations by action agencies has been carefully reviewed by the Committee staff. We believe that advance clearance by the new office should not be required, as this would bog the new agency down in the details of direct administration as well as dilute responsibility for program supervision. The staff does recommend that the F.F.N.O. have the power to delay implementation of any proposed changes in nutrition programs published in the Federal Register for up to 45 days and that it be required to issue a Nutrition Policy Impact Statement if administrative changes proposed by agencies are inconsistent with the National Nutrition Plan. The F.F.N.O. should also be consulted by departments when major decisions having nutritional implications are under consideration.

National Nutrition Center

Creation of a Federal Food and Nutrition Office to coordinate nutrition policy government-wide, still leaves a major need for institutionalizing nutrition policy at an administrative level within DHEW. The Committee staff shares the view of Senator Kennedy that a national nutrition center be established within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to directly administer expanded nutrition programs urged by the panelists. The proposed center would be directly subordinate to the Assistant Secretary for Health, and would have the following responsibilities:

1. Administration of nutrition education programs;

2. Coordination and monitoring of all federally funded nutrition research;

3. Administration of nutrition manpower programs.

Relationship Between the Federal Food and Nutrition Office and the National Nutrition Center

The F.F.N.O. would operate at the Cabinet level in terms of policy formation and coordination. The National Nutrition Center would operate at the sub-cabinet level within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The National Nutrition Center within DHEW would have no extramural nutrition policy or program responsibilities. The National Nutrition Center would, of course, formulate departmental inputs to the National Nutrition Plan prepared under F.F.N.O. supervision. If this organizational approach, separating responsibility for program monitoring and planning from day-to-day supervision is adopted, the two new agencies are expected to work closely together: but the F.F.N.O. would provide overall guidance for government-wide policy.

The Director of the National Nutrition Center would report to the Assistant Secretary of Health, and through him, and the Secretary of DHEW, to the Cabinet, rather than to the F.F.N.O. The Director of the Federal Food and Nutrition Office, on the other hand, would be the highest national nutrition policy official and would have Cabinet status. He or she would be

expected to participate in Cabinet meetings dealing with nutrition policy issues, or meetings of the National Security Council and the Domestic Policy Council when nutrition and food-related matters were on the agenda.

Other Organizational Proposals

A Presidential Assistant for Nutrition would be a valuable addition to the federal nutrition establishment only if he or she had the ear of the President. In the view of the Committee staff this proposal should not be considered a substitute for institutionalization of nutrition policy responsibilities in a Federal Food and Nutrition Office. The staff concedes, however, that should the new federal office be located within DHEW as some have proposed, rather than the independent office discussed in this report, that designation of a special Presidential assistant might facilitate institutionalization merely by enhancing visibility.

A National Nutrition Policy Board as discussed at the National Nutrition Policy Study hearings in June 1974 seems somewhat unwieldy to the Committee staff. Advisory bodies, as a general rule, facilitate the sense of participation or policy-making but not both. Participation means a large membership, while decision-making requires a smaller group. But such a Board could perform an invaluable role as a national forum for discussing nutrition policy matters. Since most groups who are interested in participation already testify frequently before the Congress, however, the Committee staff does not see this as an urgent matter.

Improving Nutrition Surveillance

At the heart of a revitalized effort to establish a national nutrition policy is better information on the nutritional status of the American people. Existing data collection is fragmentary. Dietary intake is analyzed once per decade--the last survey was published in 1965. The preliminary findings of the Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (H.A.N.E.S.) begun at Congressional request in 1968 will not be completed until 1976. While the H.A.N.E.S. data will be a significant improvement in methodology, it is not a substitute for a continuous program of national nutritional monitoring and surveillance.

The Committee staff believes that a National Nutrition Surveillance Plan is the key element of any National Nutrition Plan and should be the major tool of the Federal Food and Nutrition Office. The surveillance plan should clearly define information collection priorities and should seriously consider the possible role of Regional Nutrition Centers in collection of such data.

The National Nutrition Surveillance Plan must take into account the changing dietary pattern of the American people, especially the emergence of new kinds of food such as textured soy protein. The surveillance effort should also encompass:

Food Consumption Surveys;

A National Consumer Panel;

Composition of Food (including nutrient content);

Monitoring of Food Additives; and

Evaluation of Nutritional Status.

This last category must take into account regional variations in diet, the impact of demographic variables and other factors which can distort survey results. Measurement techniques should be employed which will track the impact of rapid food price changes on the nutritional status of the poor and the elderly.

Improving Nutrition Education

The recommendations of the panel on the need to improve federal assistance for nutrition education have already resulted in legislative initiatives. The Nutrition Education Act (S.3864) was submitted on July 31, 1974, by Senators McGovern, Abourezk, Case, Cranston, Hart, Kennedy, Mondale, Percy and Schweiker, in direct response to panel recommendations. If enacted, the proposal would:

1. Establish a 3-year pilot effort in nutrition education. Under this provision federal funds would (with a small matching State grant) be used to introduce comprehensive nutrition education programs into the nation's schools.

2. Provide for increased technical assistance to the States, as well as both in-service and undergraduate teacher training.

3. Be administered by State education agencies, stressing teacher planning and organization as well as curriculum development.

4. Provide for a Nutrition Education Coordinator in each State to develop and help enact a State plan for nutrition education.

5. Establish a State Advisory Council for Nutrition Education, including parents, teachers, school officials, school food service personnel and others to advise the State coordinator.

6. Provide for coordinating and directing each State plan by a single State Nutrition Education Office, with each plan weaving nutrition education into all appropriate aspects of the curriculum.

7. Provide for creation of a national Nutrition Education Center to compile materials, develop curriculum, and evaluate existing programs in nutrition education.

The Center would utilize and expand existing capabilities in this area within the Department of Agriculture and DHEW.

The funding level authorized for the first year would be approximately $75 million. States would contribute 25 percent of the total moneys received under this Act but teacher training and pilot programs would be 100-percent federally funded.

This proposal on nutrition education is an excellent example of the kind of comprehensive approach the Committee staff believes essential for the National Nutrition Plan to work. The bill was drafted in consultation with the Society for Nutrition Education, the American School Food Service Association, the National Dairy Council and representatives of various federal agencies and departments of education among the States.

Panelists also discussed other needs in the area of nutrition education, including the need for refresher training, improved training for medical professionals, and the general public.

Special interest was voiced by several speakers in utilizing existing food distribution programs like the National School Lunch or Food Stamp Program as a vehicle for nutrition education. Clients receiving such assistance prove a natural audience for nutritional information.

Nutrition Research

Our scientific knowledge of nutrition is still limited. We have yet to identify the actual requirements of many nutrients essential to man. Our lack of information is especially serious with respect to the special dietary needs of preschool children, teenagers and the elderly. Basic research on nutrient-nutrient interaction, nutrient-additive interaction and long-term accumulation of minerals in the body is also important, if significant progress is ever to be made on diseases associated with the aging process.

We also need more information about the effects of malnutrition on mental as well as physical development. This information would be useful to economic development strategies for developing countries as well as health policies in the United States.

Further research is also required in the area of agricultural practice, use of processed food and changing lifestyles. We still know very little about food consumption habits or the long-term effects of food additives, pesticides, and other aspects of food quality and safety.

But more than any of these areas for research, despite their intrinsic importance, is the need for better methods of nutritional surveillance. In the view of the Committee staff, high priority research into <u>better methods of nutritional surveillance, especially the development of nutritional indicators which are sensitive, reliable and inexpensive to collect and evaluate are essential to a viable national nutrition policy.</u>

Without such indicators neither a national planning document nor a new Federal office will be able to implement nutrition policy goals with any assurance of success.

Panelists at the hearings also detailed some additional areas for federally supported research worth noting:

Present methods of exchanging information among research groups is inadequate. Panelists urged the National Science Foundation to play a more active role in nutrition research.

Nutrient fortification proposals should require field testing as should intervention or novel use of nutrients on human subjects. Measurement of the impact of field tests should be a focus of national nutritional surveillance.

Support for the training of nutrition research specialists should be stepped up. Some panelists foresaw shortages in some disciplines unless prompt action is taken.

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

World Food Crisis

The growing world food crisis is already seriously affecting the U.S. economy. Eventually it will permanently alter our national eating habits and affect the budgets of even middle-income Americans. The spectre of famine in South Asia or the human tragedy of children dying of malnutrition in the Sahel region of Central Africa may be remote to most Americans. But last year's catastrophic food-price increases, following the 22 percent leap in the costs of food at home (1) in 1973 is very real to the average American family.

Domestic Impact

Even well-to-do Americans have had to tighten their belts as worldwide competition for scarce food supplies drove prices higher and higher. Upper-income families, for example, have traditionally consumed 42 percent more meat per capita than poor families. Yet 1973's 7 percent decline in meat consumption per capita was most dramatic among upper income families according to market research firms. (2) Continued high prices, therefore, seriously threaten to plunge cattle-producing regions of the nation into a stark depression.

Businessmen throughout the economy continue to reel under the double blows of rising costs and falling consumer demand as hard-pressed families divert money from other purchases to maintain food consumption. In 1973 Americans spent a higher fraction of their income for a smaller portion of food for the family table. (3)

The price of continued inaction is nearly as bad on the domestic front as it is overseas. We appear to be moving towards an historic and unnecessary dilemma: Watching our own people suffer, or standing by while countless numbers of human beings slowly die of hunger overseas. Unless hard decisions are made soon, this dilemma will end in tragedy for us all. In a world in which even unstable governments may have access to nuclear weapons, every responsible step must be taken to ensure that there is enough to eat at prices people can afford to pay.

Food and Fuel

The interdependence of nutrition and other issues is nowhere more clear than in the case of the energy crisis. U.S. food production depends on fossil fuel and this dependence is increasing:

> The agricultural complex--fertilizer makers, farmers, food processors, and others--account for nearly 30 percent of annual fuel consumption in the U.S. (4)

Energy use by the food industry has been increasing in recent years at a phenomenal rate. According to a study reported by the National Academy of Sciences in April 1974, energy use in food production has increased 422 percent since 1940. (5) Other energy uses by the industry are up by comparable amounts in the last 34 years:

> Energy use in food processing has risen 294 percent;
>
> Food transportation use of energy has risen 497 percent;
>
> Overall increase for all stages from farm to table is 316 percent. (6)

This is an average annual rate of increase of 11 percent per year.

The impact of the oil embargo was especially severe for food costs. The farmer uses fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide, tractors, drying agents and other fuel-dependent items to grow food. The expected long-term impact of skyrocketing fuel costs over the next few years could increase food costs as much as 84 percent to consumers once the impact is fully passed on at the retail level. (7)

It is regrettable that a world crisis was necessary before planners could begin to focus on the multiple dimensions of food and nutrition policy. The growing public realization that food prices, nutrition, Middle-east politics, oil prices, and the weather are intimately connected with the need for food stamps, subsidized school lunches, and the prime interest rate was long coming.

Changing Concept of Nutrition

Only a few years ago the term "nutrition policy" created the immediate image in the minds of most people of making sure that people had orange juice for breakfast, and were cautious about the amount of candy and soda pop they fed children. The present comprehensive view is part of a long-term shift in the way we view the subject.

Nutrition and Government Panelist, Dr. Grace A. Goldsmith, described this evolution in a speech before the American Society for Clinical Nutrition at their annual meeting in April 1973. In the 1920's and early 30's 'nutrition policy' focused on nutritional dificiencies, with research aimed primarily at discovering new vitamins and understanding basic metabolism. (8)

During World War II emphasis shifted to efficient use of food supplies and maximizing production. The United States was the 'breadbasket' of democracy and our ability to feed ourselves while supplying our Allies with ample foodstuffs was viewed as a significant military asset. During the war, with food rationed, public nutritional awareness was also a major policy focus. Families were urged to use government supplied charts in meal planning, and many Americans who grew up during the war still remember the USDA-supplied charts on the 'eight basic foods' posted in their family kitchens. Some nutritionists have argued that the average American ate a more wholesome diet under rationing than under free choice. (10) British experience with their National Consumer Panel after the end of wartime rationing appears to bear out this hypothesis, at least with respect to the British population. (11)

After the end of the war, nutrition policy came to be associated with feeding the hungry overseas. First in war devastated Europe and China, but gradually coming to extend to all developing countries as well. The chronic surpluses produced by American farmers matched the needs of the hungry overseas, and resulted in such programs as PL 480 (Food for Peace) during the following decade.

Preoccupation with hunger overseas persisted until the mid-60's. While hunger has always been a problem for low-income Americans, it was the civil rights movement which finally roused public attention. A major share of the credit, according to Dr. Jean Mayer who was general coordinator of the Nutrition Policy Study hearings, goes to Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

> By dedicating themselves to bettering the lives of poor blacks, Dr. King and his followers created a new climate of concern about many of our urban and educational problems, and, above all, about the plight of the poor throughout America. (12)

Dr. Mayer attributes part of the earlier lack of realization of the extent of hunger in America to the failure of health professionals to keep track of what was happening. He points out that it was not professionals but:

> A small heterogenous group of interested lay individuals who took the first steps towards eliminating hunger among black agricultural workers in the deep South. (13)

Dr. Mayer also presented his own stark indictment of calloused regional economic policies underlying hunger in America:

> ...the growing demand for manmade fibers left

> the owners of the great cotton plantations with few options--either they replaced their cotton with corn crops that required little manpower, or they committed their fields to the soil bank in exchange for a subsidy. In the wake of this turnover, no provision was made for poor blacks and their families who were wholly dependent on the plantations for their livelihood. Hunger and malnutrition and, at times, actual starvation were to be their fate. (14)

Our new national awareness about hunger in American really did not occur until the Spring of 1967 when investigations by the Senate Poverty Subcommittee were conducted at the Mississippi Delta. Sponsored by a grant from the Field Foundation, doctors formed a Citizens Board of Inquiry. The board was responsible for the publication of "Hunger U.S.A." and helped lead to the powerful CBS film documentary of the same title.

Not everyone accepted the findings of these panels at face value. Public concern led to Senate passage in June 1967 of a law requiring the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to conduct a comprehensive survey of the incidence and location of serious hunger and malnutrition. Later, in 1968, the Senate appointed a Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, which held its first hearings in December of that year.

Despite the original 6-month deadline written into the 1967 law, the nation still awaits a definitive assessment of the extent and location of domestic hunger. The 10-State Nutrition Survey carried out between 1968 and 1970 was not published until 1972. A study by the General Accounting Office concluded that the report "failed to comply with the intent of the Congress". (15) The GAO indicated that the 10-State survey failed to gather income-related data in a form which would permit meaningful examination of the relationship between hunger and poverty except in the crudest terms.

A more recent study, known as the "Health and Nutrition Examination Survey" (H.A.N.E.S.) was published in a preliminary form by DHEW only this year. But definitive interpretation of results may take another year.

The major event in nutrition policy during the past 5 years was the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health. This wide-ranging meeting remains, in the words of Conference Chairman Dr. Jean Mayer of Harvard "a watershed in American social history". (16) But Mayer goes on to point out that little has been done to implement the recommendations of that conference. Panelist Dr. Grace Goldsmith suggests that despite some successes in the area of food stamps and the National School Lunch Program, failure to act on the 1969 call for creation of a Federal Nutrition Office remains a major sore-point among those whose expectations were whetted in 1969. (17)

It was the Congress, not the Executive Branch which finally drew attention to the unfinished agenda in nutrition policy. Continuing its mandate the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs solicited testimony from a wide range of experts, both in and out of government, on the current status and prospects for a national nutrition policy as of 1974.

Hearings before the Committee were the basis for the present series of reports, and have already led to the drafting of appropriate legislation to implement some of the more urgent suggestions.

The background of this report is,therefore, one of disappointment at the failure to move on a national nutrition policy since the 1969 Conference.

B. The National Nutrition Policy Study

This report is part of a continuing series beginning with panel presentations at the National Nutrition Policy Study hearings held from June 19, through 21, 1974, in Washington, D.C. under auspices of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, under its continuing mandate and Resolution 260 of the United States Senate.

Each report in the series is designed to summarize panel views, discuss issues raised by witnesses, and elaborate on proposals or concepts suggested by panelists. This report on nutition and government deals with material presented to the Panel on Nutrition and Government chaired by Dr. D. Mark Hegsted of Harvard University and William D. Carey, Vice-President of Arthur D. Little, Inc.

As Dr. Hegsted suggested in his opening remarks at the hearings, issues raised by this panel cannot be considered in isolation from substantive topics relating to government policy discussed before other panels. Conclusions presented here, therefore, represent the interim assessment of the Nutrition Committee Staff, rather than the panelists themselves.

C. Focus of the Panel on Nutrition and Government

The panel was asked to address three broad issues related to the role of government in nutrition policy:

1. What should be the role of the Federal government in nutrition policy-making?

2. How should the Federal effort be organized?

3. What are the specific requirements for Federal support for national nutritional surveillance, nutrition research, and nutrition education?

This report follows this focus, and is organized into three chapters: I. National Nutrition Planning; II. Organizing the Federal Effort; and III. Improving Nutrition Programs and Activities. Chapter III is subdivided into sections on surveillance, research and education.

D. Profile of the Panelists

Co-Chairmen:

Dr. D. Mark Hegsted

Professor of nutrition, Harvard University School of Public Health.

Dr. Hegsted is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, and winner of the Osborne and Mendel Award of the American Institute of Nutrition (1965). He has served as past editor of Nutrition Reviews, President of the American Institute of Nutrition, Chairman of the Food and Nutrition Board, President of the National Nutrition Consortium, Inc., Chairman of the National Nutrition Sciences Training Committee of the National Institutes of Health, and as Co-chairman of the Arteriosclerosis Research Center Advisory Committee of the National Heart and Lung Institute.

Dr. Hegsted is presently serving on the Commission on Nomenclature, Procedures and Standards of the International Union of Nutrition Sciences. Dr. Hegsted also served as a panel co-chairman at the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health.

William D. Carey

Vice-President, Arthur D. Little, Inc.

Mr. Carey served as a member of the Bureau of the Budget for 26 years, and as Assistant Director of the Bureau from 1966-1969. He is a member of the Technical Advisory Board of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and on the Committee on Public Engineering Policy of the National Academy of Engineering. Mr. Carey is also a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, and serves as Chairman of the U.S. Panel on R&D Management of the Joint U.S.- U.S.S.R. Joint Commission on Science Policy.

Mr. Carey also served as a panelist at the 1969 White House Conference.

Panelists

Dr. Aaron M. Altschul

Professor of Community Medicine and International Health, Georgetown University School of Medicine.

Dr. Altschul is an internationally recognized expert on protein and nutrition. He was appointed Special Assistant for International Nutrition Improvement within the Agricultural Development Service of USDA, and as a special consultant to the Secretary of Agriculture in 1967.

In July 1969, Dr. Altschul was named Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture for Nutrition Improvement, thus broadening his assignment to cover domestic as well as international nutrition problems. Dr. Altschul, who holds 11 patents, has specialized in developing new strategies for increasing the protein value of foods. He also has served as a consultant to the United Nations and several foreign governments. Dr. Altschul was named "distinguished food scientist of the year" by the New York chapter of the Institute of Food Technologists in 1971.

Dr. William J. Darby, M.D.

President, the Nutrition Foundation, Inc.

Dr. Darby also serves as Professor of Medicine in Nutrition at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, where he has taught since 1944.

Dr. Darby is presently serving as President of the Citizen's Commission on Science, Law and the Food Supply and as a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Navajo Health Authority.

Dr. Darby is also presently serving as a member of the Task Force on World Hunger of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, the Commission on Aging of the State of Tennessee, the Expert Panel on Food Safety and Nutrition of the Institute of Food Technologists, the Council on Foods and Nutrition of the American Medical Association, the Expert Advisory Panel on Nutrition of the World Health Organization, and as co-chairman of the Hazardous Materials Advisory Committee of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Dr. Donald H. Ford

Dean, College of Human Development, Pennsylvania State University (1967).

Dr. Ford, a licensed psychologist, has taught psychology since 1955. He is an expert on the effect of nutrition on human behavior. Dr. Ford is a member of the Pennsylvania State Citizen's Advisory Committee on Corrections, and a member of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of Community Services of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Grace Goldsmith, M.D.

Director, Graduate Program in Nutrition, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Dr. Goldsmith, winner of the Osborne-Mendel Award of the American Institute of Nutrition (1959) for her research on the inter-relationship between tryptophan and niacin in human nutrition and for work on protein malnutrition is presently serving as Chairman of the Board of Nutrition Today.

Dr. Goldsmith has served as past President of the American Society for Clinical Nutrition and as Chairman of the Iron Committee, Food and Nutrition Board, National Academy of Sciences National Research Council.

She has also served as President of the American Institute of Nutrition (1963-64), and Chairman of the Committee on Dietary Allowances of the Food and Nutrition Board, National Academy of Sciences National Research Council, among other assignments.

Dr. Doris E. Hanson

Executive Director, American Home Economics Association.

Prior to accepting her present post, Dr. Hanson served as Assistant Dean of the School of Home Economics, Purdue Univeristy.

Dr. Hanson's background includes establishment of a new curriculum in home economics for the New York State public schools, as well as assisting the Republic of Pakistan in establishing a College of Home Economics under a Ford Foundation grant (1959).

Dr. Hanson represents the American Home Economics Association on the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. She has also served on the Metric Advisory Panel of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Irvin J. Lewis

Professor of Public Policy and Community Health, Albert Einstein College of Medicine (1970).

Prior to his appointment, Dr. Lewis has served the Federal Government since 1942 in a variety of posts. His last position, prior to retirement from Federal service in 1970, was as Deputy Administrator of the Health Services,and Mental Health Administration, DHEW.

Earlier assignments included service with the Bureau of the Budget, the Federal Aviation Agency, Department of State and the Office of Price Administration.

Dr. Lewis is an expert in government health care programs, and has written extensively on health care planning. He is a member of the Institute of Nutrition, National Academy of Sciences, the American Public Health Association, the American Society for Public Administration, the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the American Political Science Association.

Dr. Arnold E. Shaefer

Director of the Swanson Center for Nutrition, Inc.

Prior to his present position, Dr. Shaefer served as Chief of the Nutrition Program, National Center for Disease Control, Health Services and Mental Health Administration,

DHEW. He also has served as head of the Nutrition Section, Office of International Research, N.I.H., and as Executive Director Interdepartmental Committee on Nutrition for National Defense.

Dr. Shaefer is a consultant to the Pan American Health Organization of W.H.O., and past President of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology of the American Institute of Nutrition.

Dr. George A. Silver, M.D.

Professor of Public Health (international health), Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, Yale University School of Medicine (1969).

Dr. Silver is an internationally recognized expert in family health care, and a member of the World Health Organization. Dr. Silver has also served as Executive Associate for Health Affairs of the Urban Coalition (1968-70) and as Deputy Secretary of Health for Scientific Affairs, DHEW. Dr. Silver served as Chief of the Division of Social Medicine at Montefiore Hospital, New York City, N.Y. from 1951 to 1965.

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CHAPTER I--NATIONAL NUTRITION PLANNING

A. Background

The National Nutrition Study hearings were held in 1974. The Guidelines for the hearings, issued in May 1974, by the National Nutrition Consortium put it this way:

> A stated National Nutrition Policy is needed to insure that food will be available to provide an adequate diet at a reasonable cost to every person within the United States. (1)

Dr. D. Mark Hegsted, co-chairman of the Panel on Nutrition and Government affirmed this view when he observed:

> Practically all nutritionists and many others agree that the United States should have a national nutrition policy. Nutritional considerations should be an integral part of the development of a sound food and agricultural policy. (2)

But nutritional planning is so inextricably intertwined with other policies and programs that it is difficult to treat in isolation from other government policies. Growing knowledge of nutrition considerations colors perception of export policy, national economic planning, energy policy, and the Interstate Commerce Commission's rate structure to highway freight.

Nutrition, like the environment, is a web of many strands.

Environmental policy, in fact, provides an appropriate analogue for nutrition policy needs. The ecological perspective brought home to many Americans, for the first time, the idea of a complex interactive system.

The systems approach makes it easier to grasp that food prices in America are related to droughts in Africa or to an oil embargo in the Middle East. We can see how high petroleum prices affect the price of fertilizer, driving up the cost of food production.

We ought, therefore, to have little difficulty in grasping that the nation needs an equally integrated, comprehensive policy for nutrition. Every time a new dam is proposed, the ecologists are quick to demand an environmental impact statement. We should have a national nutrition policy equally sensitive to the implications of candy machines in the schools or massive television advertising.

Nonetheless, it has taken a global food crisis to raise public consciousness of food and nutrition issues to present levels of awareness:

> Rising food costs during the past year may provide the best opportunity and stimulus for a national nutrition policy....Regardless of whether an individual's income is marginal, rising costs of food does emphasize the problem for everyone, as it is much more tangible than the less well understood concepts of nutritional quality.
>
> Developments of the past year re-emphasize the need for a national nutrition policy. For the first time in our lifetime the question is being asked: Can the United States produce enough food? Rising food costs and inflation have obviously diminished the food budgets of many people and have emphasized for many the need for new or changed programs. (3)

Despite the difficulties of formulation, there has not been a better time for developing a National Nutrition Plan.

B. A National Nutrition Plan

1. Identifying Nutritional Problems

In some ways history itself is the history of nutritional advances. Dr. Hamish Munro argues that "nutrition is the central fact in the evolutionary history of animals," asserting that early forms of animal life developed muscles and nerves to facilitate food acquisition. (4) Man's brain can even be considered "part of his ancestor's equipment for regulating movement in the search for food." (5) Anthropologists also classify human history in nutritional terms, calling early human cultures "hunter-gatherer" and later forms "agricultural." This classification scheme is essentially nutritional in character.

Civilization still is advancing through nutritional knowledge. The discovery of vitamin D permitted elimination of rickets--a disease which formerly afflicted children even in wealthy nations--only in recent times. The discovery of vitamin B12 permitted treatment of pernicious anemia, iodized salt helped reduce the incidence of goiter--all within recent memory. Continuing discoveries belie the notion that we already know what is necessary for the human diet.

Yet, we are all operating under the concept that there is an "ideal diet" in which everyone has just the right amount of every nutrient without defining what we mean.

Like anything else, dietary "sufficiency" needs to be spelled out if real problems are to be addressed: sufficient for what? Man after all, is subject to the laws of thermodynamics. In order to expend energy in work (digging a ditch, writing a paragraph) a person must obtain that energy from food. So the assumption that there is a single "ideal" cannot

be severed from what people do, any more than it can be severed from their health status.

So nutritional adequacy needs to be defined in operational terms. A diet adequate to sustain life is inadequate to permit heavy manual labor on a continuing basis. John Gage of Hoffmann-LaRoche addressed Nutrition and Government panelists directly on this point:

> I think that the lack of a scientific baseline for nutritional adequacy is one of the most formidable barriers we face in creating a National Nutrition Policy. We talk about adequate nutrition education and adequate nutritional levels. We have no standard to aim for. (6)

Clearly what is required is to define some fairly precise limits as to what constitutes a nutritional problem. Gage suggest that:

> Rather than wait for a hardcore data base, quantitative analysis or compelling evidence that shows what the adequate standard should be, I would hope that the Committee /Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs/ or the panel /Panel on Nutrition and Government/ would recommend the establishment of a minimal nutritional level such as employed by the Household Food Consumption Survey. I would hope also that those expressions be as grams of protein, milligrams of iron, units of vitamin A, and so forth. I think this is important that this be established as quickly as possible so that we have an appropriate target to aim for. Our success must be based on the achievement of a target, and if we don't have a target to shoot for it would seem to me that all efforts would be aimed at a mythical objective. (7)

Gage has a point. Every era has its organizing myth. Ours believe in the myth of quantification. We want numbers, graphs, statistics and charts to document nutritional problems in order to measure government performance in solving those problems. But we cannot procrastinate while awaiting a perfect state of technical expertise which may never occur. We already know enough to begin.

The problem of measurement has not changed significantly since 1969 when the Panel on Standards of Dietary and Nutritional Evaluation of the White House Conference observed that:

> Many of the methods currently being employed are insufficiently sensitive, cumbersome, tedious and expensive. Micro and automated methods are needed. Methods and standards for the evaluation of nutritional status with regard to some nutrients which may well be of public health importance in the U.S. population are simply inadequate. These include nutrients such as vitamin B6 and folic acid for which we have inconclusive evidence of the extent or seriousness

> of the deficiencies in the United States. Finally, there are other nutrients such as some of the trace minerals, which are thought by some to be of health significance in the United States for which data are so fragmentary that no real evaluation can be made. (8)

The 1969 Panel recommended additional research to end this inadequacy. But such a response to the problem assumes that this is essentially a technical issue for which research is the remedy, rather than facing the underlying need for any kind of quantitative index, however inaccurate, so long as it points in the right policy direction.

The monthly unemployment statistics and the Consumer Price Index may have done more for social policy than any other single thing the government has done in the past 40 years. This realization led the Johnson Administration under DHEW Secretary Wilbur Cohen to experiment with the idea of regular social indicators, quantifying such things as "alienation," health status and educational progress. The regular reporting of such indicators were to give impetus to the Great Society's social programs.

If a monthly Nutritional Index could be developed which indicated in simple, stark terms, how the nation was doing in nutrition, national nutrition policy could be formulated on a straightforward "stimulus response" basis. When the index went down, it would be time to step up efforts, when it went up, program managers could take kudos.

We do not need to have data more precise than the programs we have for dealing with the problems we are measuring--at least not in the short run. We do not need to know the interaction of proteins with enzymes to decide that children with bloated bellies crying for food may be hungry. We need a simple standard sensitive to policy changes. A monthly opinion poll on food prices might be all that is necessary to remind the government that something should be done. Lack of a standard has led to quite capricious methods for measuring performance which have little or nothing to do with human nutritional needs. Agencies presently defend their programs in terms of how much they are spending, how many people are being reached by their program, or how many on-site service locations they have in operation.

Such standards are silly. "More" money for P.L. 480 in 1975 will mean "less" food unless inflation is compensated for; "more" food stamps issued may simply mean the economy is deteriorating. The increasing number of counties with Food Stamp programs coincides with the winding down of Commodity Distribution. It does not necessarily mean more food for anyone. Simple measures could remedy these defective indices without developing new data. Program expenditures could be reported in constant dollars. But developing indices first requires defining policy objectives more precisely. We need to know what should be monitored in order to measure program effectiveness.

2. Setting Policy Goals

The National Nutrition Consortium suggested five broad goals for a national nutrition policy:

1. Assuring an adequate, wholesome food supply at a reasonable cost to meet the needs of all segments of the population. This objective was to take present lifestyles into account, not merely set an absolute standard involving a wholly unrealistic pattern of dietary intake.

2. Maintaining food resources sufficent to meet emergency needs; and to fulfill a responsible role as a nation in meeting world food needs.

3. Developing a level of sound public knowledge and responsible understanding of nutrition and foods that will promote maximal nutritional health.

4. Maintaining a system of quality and safety control that justifies public confidence in its food supply.

5. Supporting research and education in foods and nutrition with adequate resources and reasoned priorities to solve important current problems and permit exploratory basic research. (9)

Stated in general terms, such goals appear ambiguous. Goals must be translated into some behaviorally measurable parameters if budgets are to be allocated in terms of priorities. Supplying food "at a reasonable cost" might be specified as supplying existing kinds of food at a cost of less than 30% of any person's real income. Once such a standard is specified, it becomes possible to see where we are, and identify those populations needing immediate assistance in order to meet the standard.

Specification need not require a scientifically defensible justification. We can simply decide, as a society, how much we want to spend for food, in terms of the cost of other goods and services. "Meeting the needs of all segments of the population" could be measured by asking people if they get enough to eat, or it could involve expensive clinical testing of the physiological status of a sample population.

Once national nutritional goals are translated into behaviorally measurable parameters, it is necessary to rank these goals in order of importance. Given a choice between "wholesomeness" and "adequacy" of the food supply, which is more important? It is not enough to simply say "both are equally important." In many American cities food stores routinely turn over spoiled but edible items (or simply food with expired shelf-life stickers) to soup kitchens for consumption by derelicts or the elderly. This practice, while usually illegal, is often sanctioned unofficially by city governments hard pressed by rising welfare budgets, who simply look the other way. Which is more important, wholesomeness or adequacy? We need to make up our mind if we are to have a policy.

This approach to decision-making, specification in behaviorally measurable terms permits making choices in "cost-effective" terms. Cost-effectiveness, properly understood, should not be considered a pejorative term, implying lack of human feeling. Government, after all, is spending money on social programs, including nutrition, and money is quantifiable. Do we want programs which help people a little, when the same funds could help the same people a lot? "Cost-effectiveness" properly understood, can also translate as "the greatest good for the greatest number."

3. Evaluating Policy Alternatives

The real virtue of this method of planning is to assist in choosing among alternative policies. Once goals are specified, strategies can be evaluated in experimentally verifiable ways, rather than on intuition. In more advanced systems, this can involve using such tools as "relevance trees", "decision theory" or other paraphernalia of the computer age. Planners can discuss alternatives in terms of the likelihood of achievement of the desired policy goals, not merely as abstractions.

The importance of ranking nutritional policy goals in terms of importance is obvious. If policy A is best for meeting one goal, but B is more suited to meeting another, it is vital to know which goal is most important.

At this stage of planning a nutrition policy, experiments can be conducted to test alternatives on a pilot basis.

4. Preparing the Plan

Once alternatives have been evaluated and the best approach selected, formal preparation of a written National Nutrition Plan can begin. The advantage of a written plan is that it can be reviewed, evaluated, debated and revised. The present set of informal, loose ideas about nutrition, or pious statements by public officials about the need for better nutrition are not easily reviewed--it's like punching jell-o.

A formal National Nutrition Plan can be a guidepost for public policy. We will, at long last, be in a position to accurately measure progress or the lack of it. This conception, it should be emphasized, is inherently apolitical. If the nation wishes a conservative approach, with high reliance on individual responsibility or local initiative, this can be written into the Plan. It may be that the majority of the American people do not wish the government to act as the supplier of last resort for the rejects of our social system. If that is the case, the National Nutrition Plan should reflect that value decision.

It is irresponsible to obscure the real motives of policy under the guise of ignorance, or to deliberately downplay the likely consequences of a chosen policy.

In the long run, such an approach helps feed the worst sort of paranoia about the system, and only serves as fuel for social discontent. If it is our choice to permit hunger in the name of some other social value, then let's at least talk straight with America's hungry. Our system evades responsibility by pretending that some last bit of technical evidence showing clinical symptoms of hunger is required before government faces the reality of how the poor live.

A real nutrition policy will always include significant levels of uncertainty, regardless of the state of research. We can never be sure that a decision to ban an additive which could stimulate food production is the "right" decision. The reality is one in which responsible public officials do what they can, based on the best evidence at hand at the time.

Open acceptance of responsibility by government for having a nutrition policy coherent enough to facilitate debate is at the heart of the concerns which brought people from many disciplines together for the National Nutrition Policy Study hearings. It's time to have a visible policy, even if it is imperfect, because a visible policy can be changed. The invisible nutrition policy of this government must be brought out into the light to see if this is really what we choose to be doing.

5. Nutrition and Other Priorities

A formal National Nutrition Plan will have to compete for personnel and money with all other activities of the government of a diverse nation with many interests. The National Nutrition Plan will conflict with the goals of agricultural policy, among other programs. Maintenance of farm income sometimes means pricing food out of reach of low-income consumers. Reducing spoilage, while it reduces unit costs, requires premature harvesting of vegetables and fruits, with loss in food value and appeal. Maximizing production means tolerance of medical problems caused by use of herbicides, pesticides or other additives. Each of these illustrations represents a choice situation. Articulating the real choices is the essence of responsible decision-making.

A National Nutrition Plan may conflict sharply with foreign policy goals. Tolerating an Arab oil embargo during delicate Middle East negotiations to maintain leverage over participants means higher fertilizer prices and food costs. Selling wheat to the Russians on preferential terms to bolster sagging progress in bilateral arms control negotiations may conflict with alternative humanitarian uses of the same grain in South Asia.

But all of these conflicts can usefully be aired without embarrassment once the commitment to responsible choice has been made by government. Restoration of public confidence in national decision-making at a minimum will require an end to the empty rhetoric which claims that money alone is the limit of our power to influence events. A National Nutrition Plan may finally force public acceptance of the real limits to our powers. We may not be able to free mankind from the threat of famine. Rather than being another step towards overburdening

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government, a National Nutrition Plan could be a step on the road to limited government which is responsible, and accepts the responsibility for its real choices.

It is the belief of the Committee staff that it is better to make promises we can keep than it is to pretend we do not have problems in feeding our people. It is better to start with articulated goals, specified in terms of concrete milestones amenable to measurement, than it is to piously promise that no American need go hungry.

CHAPTER II — ORGANIZING THE FEDERAL EFFORT

A. Need for Institutionalization

A formal National Nutrition Plan will remain an empty commitment unless a specific federal office is assigned responsibility to implement it. As Dr. Irvin Lewis, Professor of Community Medicine at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine suggested to the panel at the hearings last June:

> Any major need of society, once it has been identified absolutely requires a focus or leadership and effort in government if that need is to be adequately financed by government. (1)

Institutionalization should not be perceived as an end in itself; nutritionists and concerned health professionals have no desire to expand the government bureaucracy for its own sake. Instead, as Dr. Lewis emphasized:

> Government organization isn't static, but it has to reflect in a dynamic way: (a) the importance that society attaches to a particular field; (b) the substantive policy approach of government; and (c) the administrative or operational relationships among government programs in any field. (2)

The case for institutionalizing, as Dr. Lewis views it, is not just for "bookkeeping" or "efficiency," but represents a realistic assessment of what is necessary to get a program which is well organized, and adequately financed under present conditions. Institutionalization permits development of career-orientated staff support at the agency level, and facilitates the interpersonal connections--the human web of policy--that is necessary if a long-term commitment to a national nutrition policy is to be forthcoming. (3)

B. Organizational Recommendations of 1969 White House Conference

The 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health concluded that:

> Balkanization of responsibilities and authority constitutes a serious barrier to a concerted attack on hunger and malnutrition. (4)

From the 1969 perspective it seemed that the rapid growth of programs, proliferating as they were in many different agencies throughout the government, was dividing rather than promoting a concerted attack on nutrition problems:

> As the Federal government is now organized for roles and missions affecting food, nutrition and health, these problems are everybody's business and therefore nobody's. We recognize that this profusion of interests arises from the realization that nutritional fitness intersects with the government's objectives in promoting health, and education, job opportunity, family security, maternal and infant care, early childhood development, income maintenance, food and agricultural programs and a wide range of efforts to enhance economic opportunity. (5)

An example often cited of such profusion of jurisdiction is the overlapping responsibilities shared by the Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Agriculture with respect to regulation of meat in food products. FDA regulates foods containing less than 2 percent meat, while USDA regulates foods containing more than 2 percent meat. This means that some soups fall under FDA regulations, while others are USDA's responsibility. (6)

The 1969 Conference made four major organizational recommendations:

1. Creation of a Federal Nutrition Office.

2. Designation of a Presidential Assistant for Nutrition Policy.

3. Assigning the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Executive Order responsibilities for government-wide nutrition policy coordination.

4. Creation of Area Nutrition Centers to supplement efforts of State and local public health agencies. (7)

In calling for a Federal Nutrition Office, the 1969 panelists argued that:

> The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has at its disposal, a remarkably diversified array of programs that have high relevance to nutrition and health. At the same time, the Department is an extremely complex organization. The task is to create a mechanism for synthesizing and coordinating research and applied community and individual services. (8)

The 1969 Conference clearly conceived of the Nutrition Office as having the function of formulating and carrying through policies within DHEW, rather than government-wide. They recommended that the new office be subordinate to the Assistant Secretary for Health and Medical Affairs within the Department. (9) Government-wide coordination was presumably to be a function of the separate recommendation for a special

Presidential Assistant for Nutrition. (10)

The belief of the 1969 White House Conference participants that DHEW was the best existing vehicle for institutionalization of nutrition policy was reflected in their call for delegation of Presidential powers to the DHEW Secretary for formulating Executive Orders relatingto nutrition policy, and their request that the Food Stamp and Commodity Distribution programs be transfered to DHEW from USDA.

On balance, the 1969 Conference urged:

> Greater centralization of program responsibility within DHEW.
>
> Enhancing visibility for nutrition concerns by designation of a Special Presidential Assistant for Nutrition.

A fair assessment of the tone of the 1969 Conference was that a hope that something was about to happen had been generated. Regrettably, these high expectations and hope gave way to frustration.

C. The View in 1974

The Panel on Nutrition and Government at the National Nutrition Policy Study hearings concluded that, as of June 1974, nothing had been done to implement any of the 1969 Recommendations except a move by the administration to consolidate the Food Stamp Program with other income-maintenance efforts in DHEW. Even this action appears not to be what the panelists had in mind in 1969: They wanted centralization of programs as part of a comprehensive policy. The Administration proposal, on the other hand, appears as an effort to make the Food Stamp Program compete for already scarce welfare dollars; this is viewed by many as a first step towards elimination of the program entirely.

> The basic position of the Administration is that families should make their own spending decisions by receiving income assistance in cash, rather than in kind. Thus, the transfer of food stamps and related 'nutrition programs' is perceived as a step towards welfare reform, not nutrition reform... This may be a reasonable policy, but it preempts a national policy for nutrition as a health goal. Nutrition would be associated with the "W" in HEW rather than the "H". (11)

As panelists observed in subsequent discussion at the June hearings:

> What is to be gained by urging the transfer to HEW if nutrition programs are to be buried under income-maintenance programs? Will the transfer be more of a setback to nutrition than a gain? (12)

Concern that government was abandoning its commitment was not alleviated by a review of the Office of Management and Budget's 144 Presidentially approved Federal objectives in 1974. Only two objectives related to nutrition:

"develop a more cost-effective child nutrition program"

and

"rationalize eligibility requirements for food stamps"

Both of these objectives were submitted by the Department of Agriculture. (13) Concern among participants at the 1974 hearings about the income-maintenance obsession of the administration ran deep:

> The failure of the federal government to design and implement a national nutrition policy and organization is largely due to a policy viewpoint which associates nutrition with "income maintenance rather than health policies." (14)

In denouncing this parochial viewpoint, Panel Co-Chairman Dr. D. Mark Hegsted of Harvard observed that:

> The first and primary responsibility of the Food and Nutrition Policy must be the maintenance and improvement of health. The major responsibility must fall on the health system --that is, physicians, nurses, dietitians, nutritionists, dentists, health auxiliaries of all kinds. And in this system, the physician must play a primary role. (15)

The panel felt administration myopia went even deeper than narrowness of conception:

> The Executive Branch senses no urgency to create policy planning, coordinating or surveillance arrangements../it/will take a great deal of convincing before it recognizes a priority for nutrition policies, and nothing is in sight which is likely to be convincing. (16)

The panel connected this philosophy of inaction with the present emphasis of government managers on:

> compelling evidence /without which/ the claims of nutrition advocates receive polite consideration and short shift. (17)

Panelists believed that:

> absent any scientifically-based and authenticated standards of nutritional adequacy, and absent any ongoing surveillance system linked to such standards, the policymakers will not assign serious priority or resources to the improvement of nutrition and health. (18)

Yet whose responsibility is it to obtain such information?

The absence of a scientific baseline (discussed more fully in Chapter III) is presently being used as a screen to avoid commitment but it is the same government which refuses to collect the information it claims is necessary.

Members of the panel therefore emphasized that:

> The perceived lack of scientific baseline data is the most formidable barrier to the creation of a national policy focus,
>
> and
>
> Nothing is being done at the top policy levels to accelerate the formulation of the baseline. (19)

With this depressing assessment of the status of administration interest in nutrition policy, it is not surprising that, as of 1974, experts in nutrition policy who were calling for centralization of programs in DHEW only 5 years ago, now believe:

> Decision-making in the federal government is pluralistic. It is shared, negotiated, and bargained. But the strategic directions and major policy choices are focused in the hands of a few: the White House, the OMB, and the Domestic Council. Policy goals, organizational changes, objectives, funding, new legislation--these decisions are settled at the highest levels. The Departments and agencies may propose, but the power centers dispose. (20)

And how do the experts size up the quality of decision-making at these "power centers"? The panel concluded that:

1. Nobody in the Executive Office of the President is in charge of the nutrition policy question.

2. No single focus exists anywhere in the executive branch of the government to assess and advocate nutrition policies.

3. No overall co-ordinating machinery exists at either the executive office level or the interdepartmental level for nutrition planning, program management or R&D. (21)

It seems fair to observe, in summary, that views have shifted significantly since 1969. If any single quotation could crystallize this change, it might sound like the following observation last June:

> The recommendations of the White House Conference for government organization may not have been the most appropriate. Political and financial realities must be considered in the development of any system which will be effective. (22)

Despite this growing cynicism, the Panel on Nutrition and Government like the White House Conference before it, still recommended creating a Federal Nutrition Office. (23) But, in 1974, interest has shifted towards creation of an independent office with direct access to recalcitrant policy-makers, rather than buried in DHEW.

D. The Case for a Federal Nutrition Office

The proposed formalized National Nutrition Plan outlined in Chapter I can never be written, much less implemented, unless the present federal effort in nutrition is substantially revamped.

This means either creating a new office, or giving an existing office additional functions. The staff of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs believes that the case for a new office is stronger than the argument for expanding an existing department.

To begin with, which department can exclusively claim jurisdiction over this field? As we have seen, nutrition cuts across issues affecting many departments. Nutrition policy affects agriculture, commerce, exports, foreign relations, health and even national defense. As Senator McGovern has suggested:

> It is a subject whose jurisdiction cuts across a dozen federal agencies. I think that is part of our problem. Great progress has been made, but these is a desperate need for direction and coordination of these activities which cut across so many lines of Federal responsibility. (24)

Furthermore, assignment of the nutrition policy function to any single existing agency could permanently cast nutrition policy into a restrictive mold. If assigned to agriculture, nutrition policy might merely be a method of expanding demand for farm products. After all, this is the way the food stamp and school lunch programs are often defended by USDA officials even now.

Placing policy solely within DHEW, as recommended in 1969, while possibly preferable on a number of grounds, also has drawbacks. It still does not reconcile the educational, health and welfare dimensions of a comprehensive nutrition policy.

The current global food crisis suggests that it is no longer feasible to have a purely domestic nutrition policy--if that ever was the case--yet assigning the new office to a "domestic" cabinet department would inevitably have such an effect. The international dimension of nutrition policy might continue, as in recent years, to be subordinated to the dictates of foreign policy rather than humanitarian goals.

It seems clear that the multi-dimensional character of "nutrition" as a policy focus leaves only one alternative:

an independent office, outside any existing department.

Creation of an independent office avoids not only the jurisdictional squabble which otherwise might occur among the departments, but neatly sidesteps the comparable dispute among the technical disciplines as well. Real differences exist among doctors, nutritionists, public health officials, and others as to which discipline should dominate the field. This year's expressed concern from the medical profession that administration policy has neglected the health component of nutrition could easily become next year's assertion by agronomists that the technology of food production was not being integrated into nutrition policy-making.

If anything seems clear, it is that nutrition policy must not be the province of any single perspective.

Another virtue of creating an independent office is visibility. It is a lot harder to hide the existence of any agency with its own letterhead and national director. An agency within a larger department, however, is easier to suppress. The fate of the Office of Comprehensive Health Planning is instructive. During the mid-sixties the Congress directed the establishment of a system designed to encourage comprehensive health planning at the State and local level. Each state was to create a single agency to integrate health planning within its boundaries into a single comprehensive plan. The plan was to be based on a consensus developed among both consumers and providers of health services.

But CHP, including its ambitious program for training multi-disciplinary professionals at the graduate level, floundered because of lack of visibility at the national level. State and local officials were never able to look to Washington for direction. The Office of Comprehensive Health Planning was buried alive in DHEW, where it remains to this day. We still are no nearer to comprehensive health planning.

Independence, of course, is no guarantee of visibility. There can never be an organizational substitute for Presidential interest. But a Federal Food and Nutrition Office whose director has access to the President can never disappear entirely. Furthermore, visibility facilitates integrity. If a highly visible public official is removed, it almost always ensures ventilation of a major policy issue.

Functions of the Federal Food and Nutrition Office

As Senator McGovern outlined to the members of the Panel on Nutrition and Government, an independent office would be responsible for setting forth national policy and priorities in this vital area: The director of such an office would have independent access to the President in addition to maintaining close liaison with other federal agencies.

The McGovern plan, in brief, would create an independent office of cabinet status in terms of visibility and access, but not a large new bureaucracy. The purpose of the office would be planning and coordination, not program administration. As we have already seen, it is not possible to separate out the

nutrition dimension from other aspects of policy. The goal is not to subordinate agricultural export policy to nutrition policy, but to insure that the nutritional implications of exports are taken into account during decision-making at the executive level.

The new office would be analogous to the Federal Energy Agency during its early months. The Federal Food and Nutrition Office would initially, like FEO, operate as a clearinghouse for ideas and suggestions for national nutritional goals.

But, once in operation, the major task of the FFNO would be to prepare a draft National Nutrition Plan, as outlined in Chapter I, for submission to the President.

In preparing this plan, the FFNO would be required to consider the views of all agencies and department having jurisdiction over nutrition-related programs and activities. The Committee staff believes this task would be facilitated by having the FFNO make the final determination as to whether a program was nutrition-related.

Since the FFNO is not an administrative agency--it has no programs--it does not displace the "chain of command" from program to agency to departmental secretary, or to the President. But no agency would be able to have its nutrition-related programs escape policy review and comment by the FFNO.

The purpose of this broad scope for the new agency is not to subordinate existing programs to judicial review by nutritionists, but rather to guarantee that the nutritional implications of major policies will be recognized at the time they are formulated. Responsible government often involves hard choices. There will be many occasions in which nutritional considerations must be subordinated to larger economic or political factors. But these choices need to be identified, and the nutritional costs known.

By funneling nutrition policy issues through a single office, the possibility of a consistent and comprehensive policy will be increased. At a minimum, this approach will rouse national concern whenever outright contradictions in policy goals are confronted in a particular issue.

The National Nutrition Plan will provide the FFNO with a working document to chart the nation's progress towards implementing the nutrition-related goals of specific action programs of the various departments and agencies. The FFNO could also become a focus to presenting administration views on nutrition policy issues before the Congress.

A specific function of the new agency would be to issue Nutrition Impact Statements whenever significant decisions affecting the objectives contained in the National Nutrition Plan occurred.

Under this conception, the F.F.N.O. would serve as a kind of ombudsman within government for highlighting the secondary nutritional implications of major policy decisions. The F.F.N.O. would not have veto power over decisions, but would be a voice of concern strategically placed where it might be heard by those with the power to do something.

The F.F.N.O. would also be responsible for following through on the commitments made by agencies during formulation of the National Nutrition Plan. Though agencies would administer their programs, the F.F.N.O., not the agencies, would evaluate performance in meeting milestones specified during the planning process.

The F.F.N.O. would have a major voice in developing the National Nutrition Surveillance System (discussed in Chapter III) though it would not operate the system. Data would be collected by line agencies, who might even interpret the results, in a preliminary manner, for its own internal use. But definitive interpretation of all nutrition program performance data would be an F.F.N.O. mandated responsibility. The need for a definitive interpretation by an agency other than the one administering a nutrition-related program is a major advantage of having an independent office without program responsibilities.

The power to issue an adverse Nutrition Impact Statement falls short of supervision or veto over line agencies performing their responsibilities as they see them. Agencies could choose to ignore the statement and implement their policies despite the adverse nutritional implications. The Committee staff believes the F.F.N.O. should have the power to delay final implementation of any administrative decision seen as nutritionally unsound. The delay would allow time for Congressional review and alert the public to the significance of the proposed change in policy. Such a delay power would still fall short of administrative control, but would act as a "trip-wire" escalating the significance of the nutritional component of an agency's policies.

This proposal for a Federal Food and Nutrition Office offers a realistic way of implementing the kinds of concerns expressed by members of the Panel on Nutrition and Government. An independent agency, with access to the President, responsible for formulating a National Nutrition Plan as well as monitoring progress in achieving the goals of the plan provides the Congress with an unambiguous method of implementing Congressionally-mandated objectives in food, nutrition and health.

E. A National Nutrition Center

The proposed Federal Food and Nutrition Office would bring focus and direction to national nutrition policy. In order to provide the interdepartmental frame of reference, the F.F.N.O. concept outlined here excludes program administration functions--otherwise it would be a Department of Nutrition, forfeiting its role as "ombudsman" for nutrition programs, whatever agency administered them.

But, in addition to the clear need for such a planning and monitoring activity at the Cabinet-level, the proliferation of programs at the departmental level also leaves something to be desired. At the June 21st session of the Nutrition Policy Study Panel on Health, Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts outlined a plan (25) for clarifying the administration of on-going nutrition programs which the Panel on Nutrition and Government believes has great merit.

The Kennedy proposal would group four program areas within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare under a single National Nutrition Center subordinate to the Assistant Secretary for Health in DHEW. (26)

The Center would coordinate and monitor DHEW nutrition programs in education, monitoring, research and manpower. (27) The Center's location within DHEW would facilitate monitoring of other departmental nutrition activities as well.

In Senator Kennedy's view, "foremost under the national nutrition center should be the establishment of nutrition education programs." (28) Such programs would emphasize public nutritional awareness, improving nutrition education of physicians, and other specialized target populations. (29)

The Senator's second area of concern was nutritional monitoring:

> ...periodic reviews of our national eating habits can provide the basis for ensuring that the public is eating the proper food. (30)

The third concern was research. Senator Kennedy argued that nutrition research not only includes information about nutrition problems, but also the role of nutrition in preventive health programs. He also stressed research on the effects of preservatives, additives and pesticides on human health. (31)

The final area the Senator proposed for the Center was manpower. He argued that:

> Programs to provide additional manpower as para-professionals and health nutritionists who can deliver these services must be initiated to guarantee the success of the other...basic aspects of a national nutrition policy. (32)

Relationship Between Proposed Federal Food and Nutrition Office and the National Nutrition Center

The Federal Food and Nutrition Office would operate at the Cabinet level in terms of policy formulation and coordination. The National Nutrition Center would operate as a sub-Cabinet activity subordinate to the Assistant Secretary for Health of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The Center would actually administer line programs related to nutrition within DHEW. Inputs by the Center to National

Nutrition Policy would be through departmental channels.

The F.F.N.O. would not administer any programs. F.F.N.O. influence over line programs would be restricted to its impact on the budgetary planning process during the formulation of the National Nutrition Plan and by issuance of adverse Nutrition Impact Statements.

If this organizational approach is adopted, the two new agencies could have a close working relationship on a day-to-day basis. DHEW and the National Nutrition Center would be intimately involved in the process of evaluating data collected through survey instruments and other collection efforts. Such information would be the basis of policy decisions formulated by the F.F.N.O. or the cause for most Nutrition Impact Statements issued over the course of time.

The Director of the National Nutrition Center would report to the Assistant Secretary of Health, and through him to the Secretary, the Cabinet and the President.

The Director of the Federal Food and Nutrition Office, on the other hand, would be the highest ranking nutrition policy official in the nation, and would have Cabinet status. He or she would normally attend Cabinet meetings dealing with nutrition policy issues, or meetings of the National Security Council or the Domestic Policy Council when nutrition or food-related matters were on the agenda.

F. A Presidential Assistant for Nutrition

While less desirable than creation of a Federal Food and Nutrition Office, designation of a special Presidential Assistant for Nutrition, as proposed by the 1969 White House Conference is clearly an idea with some merit. Such an official, especially if he or she were not only qualified in terms of experience, but also a person of some national recognition, could quickly become a useful focal point for enhancing nutrition awareness both in and out of government.

Unfortunately, the sad state of visibility of nutrition policy does not make finding such an individual an easy task. The national leaders in the field, while widely known in professional and academic circles, are not household words.

The Committee staff concludes that the goals of National Nutrition Policy Study hearing panelists could be articulated with greater effect from the vantage point of a White House staff position if voiced by an individual already prominent in the eyes of the public, rather than by selecting the most qualified expert in nutrition.

This realization underscores our concept of the limitations of a White House Special Assistant. In our view, this all too often is a route for co-opting an important cause--such as the need for a national nutrition policy--with the appearance of a response rather than a real response. The history of the White House Assistant for Consumer Affairs is a case not to emulate.

The staff further believes that designation of such an official in addition to creation of a Federal Nutrition Office would be redundant, unless the F.N.O. Director was also the Special Presidential Assistant. The staff therefore prefers that this proposal be tabled in deference to the F.F.N.O. concept.

G. Food and Nutrition Policy Board

Concern of panelists at the 1974 Nutrition Policy Study hearings as well as frustration extending back to the 1969 White House Conference has revived interest in the creation of a National Nutrition Policy Board. Such a body--called a Nutrition Advisory Council by some--appears to attempt to institutionalize some sort of national forum for interested groups to issue periodic statements on nutrition policy in a context designed to guarantee some hearing for their views.

The Committee staff is sympathetic to this concern. The long struggle to get a national nutrition policy with some kind of integrity has been a grueling and disappointing series of frustrations for countless numbers of concerned Americans in many disciplines.

As articulated by the National Nutrition Consortium in Guidelines for a National Nutrition Policy such a board would consist of:

> ...representatives of various organizations with special competence in dealing with food and nutrition issues...(33)

The Board would:

> ...advise the Office of Nutrition in planning and evaluating a National Nutrition Program. (34)

It is the opinion of the staff, however, that concerned groups as well as nongovernment experts would be well advised to keep clear of the institutionalization of nutrition policy-making per se, in order to retain their full freedom to criticize and review government behavior from a non-administration frame of reference.

We believe that participation of such groups and experts in the process of legislative hearings before the Congress and through periodic national conferences can allow full articulation of viewpoints without another layer of quasi-governmental organization. It may be more important in the long run to institutionalize concern for nutrition within existing agencies and activities than to create new ones. A greater concern for nutrition by the National Academy of Sciences and the National Institutes of Health might do more for institutionalization than another policy board.

It has been the experience of those intimately acquainted with the legislative process that partial institutionalization of interest groups in the form of a Policy Review Board all too often merely provides a convenient stage for divisive terri-

torial disputes--much to the satisfaction of institutional opponents of change--rather than clear-cut articulation of issues.

It is also clear that such bodies cannot simultaneously serve the function of full participation of all interest groups and still serve the function of policy review. These two goals are inherently antagonistic. One needs a large group to insure full participation and a small group to make a decision.

On balance, the Committee staff does not support creation of a Nutrition Policy Review Board at the present time, on the grounds that this is more likely to become a forum for verbal maneuver among those long denied a chance to articulate their well-placed concerns than a policy-making body.

H. Other Organizational Proposals

As Dr. Hegsted pointed out in his opening remarks to the Panel on Nutrition and Government at the hearings, the haphazard way in which nutrition issues are now treated made it difficult even to organize a coherent discussion. (35) It proved impossible to focus all government-related nutrition issues in a single panel, and several other panels inevitably chose to recommend specific governmental responses of an organizational character. These other proposals growing out of the study hearings are discussed briefly below. More extensive analysis of these proposals will be made in future Committee reports.

Panel on Nutrition and the Consumer

The panel had two basic proposals: (1) creation of a standing Committee on Food Policy in both the Senate and the House of Representatives; (2) Central administration of all Executive Branch nutrition programs by a single department.

(1) Standing Committee on Food Policy

This proposal would create an additional standing committee in both Houses of Congress to deal with these issues. (36) The new Senate Food Policy Committee would, presumably, share jurisdiction over relevant legislation with the Committees on Agriculture, Labor and Public Welfare, Commerce, Treasury and other committees with an interest in issues impinging on food, nutrition or health.

Stated in this way, it is clear that the hopes of panelists that all issues impinging on nutrition could be dealt with in a single committee is unrealistic. The Nutrition Committee staff believes this proposal reflects the clear need for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to nutrition by creating an additional committee in each House of Congress.

But the Committee staff believes that this proposal should be tabled at least until it becomes clear how the Budget Reform Act will affect Committee operations during the next session. Under the Budget Reform Act a number of measures have been taken to attempt to improve the treatment of related issues

by the Committee system. We believe the new approach should be given a fair test before additional reorganization is attempted.

(2) Centralization of Food Policy Programs

Under this proposal all food policy programs, including those dealing with production, standards, safety, and nutrition education would be transferred to a single agency within the Executive Branch. The new centralized agency would be given four additional functions:

1. Administration of a National Consumer Library.
2. Creation of a Bureau of National Economics.
3. Creation of a Nutrition Research Administration.
4. Designation of a consumer "ombudsman" for nutrition and health, independent of the Executive Branch.

While the Committee staff shares the concerns which motivated these proposals, it does not endorse them at this time. Most proposals to create agencies or officials independent of the Executive Branch can be viewed as a sign of continuing distrust of the motives of public officials. Such distrust may or may not be based on solid grounds, but the Committee staff believes then that there is no technical or administrative solution which can effectively compensate for unconcerned or incompetent public officials.

In our view, it would be better to directly confront the concerns which led to this proposal than to hope that another independent agency would be a cure-all remedy. We do not yet need a Special Prosecutor for Nutrition on the public payroll.

The thrust of these proposals run against the major theme developed in this report: Nutrition programs are inherently interdepartmental and interdisciplinary, requiring coordination and goal-setting rather than centralized administration.

The Committee staff therefore cannot endorse the idea of what would appear to be a Department of Food Policy at the Cabinet level. The new department, if it truly centralized all the programs related to production, standards, safety, and nutrition education would combine half of the government in one agency. The Departments of State, Agriculture, Treasury, Commerce, Labor, HEW, and Defense would be replaced by a single agency--or, alternatively, the Department of Agriculture would be divested of crop production, Commerce of export policy, and State of foreign assistance.

Sub-panel on Popular Nutrition Education

This panel recommended establishment of an Advisory Commission on Nutrition, (37) using the present Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations as a model. The Commission would include representatives of federal and State governments, encompassing spokesmen for USDA, State Commissioners of Agriculture, DHEW, State, Commerce, and the Office of Management and Budget. Representatives of scientific nutrition societies would also be included.

The Commission would be jointly funded by the federal and State governments. Its functions would include holding public hearings. All proceedings would be a matter of public record.

The Committee staff believes that such a body, while providing a public forum, would not lead to greater participation by interested parties in the formulation of a national nutrition policy. The proposal has the same weaknesses as the Food and Nutrition Policy Board already discussed.

The Committee staff, therefore, does not endorse this recommendation at the present time.

Sub-panel on Nutrition and Disease

This sub-panel recommended creation of a national board to review all food advertising directed at adults in the United States. (38) The board would also advise the press as to the merits (or lack of merit) of claims of diet faddists. The board would collect, evaluate and disseminate information on healthful nutrition practices to the public.

The Committee staff believes that the issue of food advertising and the related questions of food labelling and nutrition education deserve further investigation. Experts in the field of food marketing appear increasingly to believe that the long-term trend is away from brand-name marketing through national media campaigns towards point-of-sale advertising in food stores, or price competitive advertising in local markets.

A recent speculative forecast in Advertising Age even suggested that brand-name advertising for food products may be a thing of the past by 1980. Such a review board, therefore, may not be necessary.

Creation of such a board also raising constitutional issues of prior restraint and censorship. We believe that even if advertising restraints are advisable, consideration should be given to using existing institutional vehicles (FDA, FTC) rather than creating a new agency.

CHAPTER III-IMPROVING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

A. Nutritional Surveillance

Nutritional surveillance, as pointed out in Chapter I, is at the heart of a revitalized national nutrition policy. We need information in order to know what nutrition problems we have, and how existing programs and plans are impacting on these problems.

The major health problems of the United States include heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, and other conditions which, to the best of present knowledge, are at least partially exacerbated by what people ingest in their diet.

Major social and educational issues turn on nutrition-related concerns as well. Inflationary food prices place pressure on the social security recipient, which in turn creates pressure for increases in benefit levels. Lack of an adequate breakfast for a school-age child, for whatever reason, may lead to less then optimum learning conditions.

Dr. Aaron Altschul of the Georgetown University School of Medicine believes:

> A policy of surveillance and monitoring may well be the cornerstone of a National Nutrition Policy, and might well be the structure upon which to build a coordinated nutrition policy. (1)

The Panel on Nutrition and Government states the issue as follows:

> A primary deficiency in the development of both policy and programs is the lack of information—the kind of information which would be supplied by a surveillance and monitoring system...we have scattered bits of information but these do not tell us what we need to know. (2)

An evaluation of the impact of food price changes on nutritional status conducted by the Committee staff in January of last year concluded:

> Rapidly rising food prices in 1973 had an adverse impact on the diet of the average American family, but the full extent that impact had—especially on the poor, elderly, and low income—is obscured and may never be known. Government information

> gathering in this vital area is severely deficient. (3)

That study went on to point out:

> Neither the special Ten-State nutrition survey conducted by HEW between 1968 and 1970, nor the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (H.A.N.E.S.) link month-by-month or even year-to-year changes in food prices to either food consumption or actual nutrient intake. (4)

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare concedes, with respect to the H.A.N.E.S. data:

> These preliminary data permit only limited general conclusions concerning the nutritional status of the U.S. population. (5)

Dr. John E. Kinsella of Cornell University argued, in addressing the Panel on Nutrition and Government that, regardless of the effect of food price changes, there is a continuing need to monitor what people are eating:

> There are many justifications and needs for establishing regularly recurring or continuing food consumption surveys. Frequent surveys are needed...as supply alters and as economic status of consumers change. (6)

Dr. Kinsella also suggested other needs, including the relationship of eating habits to health, especially arteriosclerosis and heart disease, as well as to facilitate useful design of educational programs. (7)

Another major theme raised in recent years has been the changing nature of food itself. Dr. L. M. Henderson of the University of Minnesota, in a paper presented to the American Public Health Association's ninety-ninth annual meeting, observed:

> To begin with, future patterns of food consumption are not at all clear and if they were, the nutritional implications would not be easily predictable. (8)

In discussing these trends, the panel suggested that:

> This change takes place mostly for reasons that have nothing to do with nutrition. It may be the availability of food; it may be money to buy food; the availability of convenient forms of food; food habits have changed or been encouraged to change by the cultural influences. (9)

These changes include the total amount of food consumed, excessive intake of some nutrients; or reduction of certain foods in favor of others. Above all, some changes are for the better, while some are for the worse. <u>The first priority then is to find out what is happening</u>.

For these reasons the 1969 White House Conference made national nutritional surveillance a major point within its recommendations. Panelists unanimously agreed that both monitoring and surveillance programs were necessary, and urged that these programs:

> Gather data that will serve as the basis of applied nutrition programs aimed at the improvement of the nutritional status of the American population with emphasis on the poor. (10)

The Panel on Nutrition and Government expanded these recommendations to include suggestions that any new surveillance system include:

1. Food consumption surveys;
2. Composition of food;
3. Monitoring of food additives; and
4. Evaluation of nutritional status.

The Committee staff therefore recommends that a National Nutritional Surveillance System be an integral part of the National Nutrition Plan. Such a system, which should be developed under the auspices of the proposed Federal Food Nutrition Office would include a broad cross section of data collection instruments. The system would work only if it were "sensitive" to the impact of changes in policy. Sensitivity in this technical sense (borrowed from systems theory) means that an increase in Food Stamp allotment levels during one month ought to show up in terms of increased food consumption among program participants in subsequent months, if the program is working as intended.

Nutritional Surveillance System

The kind of nutritional surveillance required by the nation is too urgent to permit further delay while researchers attempt to develop some perfect national nutritional index which is easy to collect and tabulate. The struggle for better methods of measurement must take place simultaneously with ongoing collection of the best available indicators we already have on tap.

A nutritional surveillance system ideally would be developed in four phases:

1. Identification of the strategic goals of national nutrition policy.

2. Listing of those kinds of data which are essential to achieving these goals. If we want to reduce the level of salt in the average diet, we must know how much salt people are consuming over a period of time.

3. We must translate these essential elements of information into a set of possible indicators which could help answer the basic question at hand. We might list, using the above example, annual commercial

sales of salt for human consumption, the current estimated population of the United States, and incidence rate of hypertension as possible indicators of where the nation stood on salt consumption.

4. Once a list of indicators is developed, a plan to collect such information is needed. The plan would specify which indicators would be utilized, who would collect the data, and provide for dissemination of the information to appropriate agencies and activities.

Each step in this process is essential. Information should not be collected merely because it is "nice to know" or some researcher would like to have it. Business and government agencies at the action level are currently being inundated with forms and documents to fill out concerning all kinds of data. The nutrition surveillance effort of this country should be tied at the outset to policy goals.

Once we know our goals, we need to specify what kinds of information are essential to achieving these goals. This step, development of essential elements of information, is the heart of any future system of nutritional surveillance.

The next phase, development of some behaviorally definable parameters which might constitute evidence, one way or another, as to some essential element of information (e.g. the incidence of malnutrition in the United States) is equally essential. Malnutrition is a state of being which must be inferred at the clinical or the societal level by observation of something measurable.

Finally, all these things need to be related to an ongoing planning process.

The Committee staff believes that any viable nutrition surveillance plan must be worked out by experts and does not wish to second-guess what a Federal Food and Nutrition Office staff might propose as an effective method to implement such a plan. As outlined above, the national nutrition policy goals will have to be articulated in some detail before the kind of data essential to implementing such a plan can be specified or alternative measures assessed. In developing such a plan the F.F.N.O. would clearly have to take into account the cost of collecting data as well as its level of accuracy.

Nonetheless, the panel made four specific suggestions which ought to be considered as appropriate kinds of methods for getting a clearer picture of where the nation stands, nutritionally speaking:

1. Evaluation of Food Purchase and Consumption

Short-term methods could be used to monitor the effects of food price changes and supplies. The panel recommended that:

> A series of sites should be identified and a system developed which will continuously monitor changes in purchasing patterns. With modern computer technology it should be possible to record the changes on a month-to-month basis. (11)

The Committee staff believes consideration should also be given to use of a National Consumer Panel to obtain such information. Such a system has worked effectively in Great Britain and has even been utilized by commercial firms in the U.S. for several decades.

Congress might even consider purchase of proprietary data such as that collected by the Market Research Corporation of America's National Menu Census or data available from the National Purchase Diary. Both have month-to-month data on food consumption (and preparation) patterns going back for nearly 30 years in some cases.

The existing government collection effort—the decennial survey of Food Consumption done by the Department of Agriculture—while a valuable aid in understanding trends is largely of only historical value. The most recent data, for example, was collected in 1965.

The Committee believes that once published, the Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (intended to be repeated every 5 years) may alleviate some of the information gaps, but urges that a stepped-up pace of collection (perhaps once each 4 years for a complete cycle of observation) be adopted. If such a cycle coincided with the Presidential elections, administrations might even be held accountable for their nutrition policies.

2. Nutrient Composition of Food

Analysis of dietary patterns will not provide much insight unless the nutrient contents of foods are also monitored. Recent revelations that a major chain store in New York State had been diluting milk with water for several years highlights the need for ongoing surveillance.

The national food supply is changing rapidly, and new foods of uncertain composition are entering the market at a rapid rate. Even familiar foods change in quality with time—soil leaching denudes products of essential vitamins formerly found in ample quantities.

The panelists suggested monitoring the nutrient contents of food on a random sampling basis, with data indexed and encoded onto a computerized record accessible anywhere in the nation.

3. Food Safety

All foods should be monitored for the presence of potentially hazardous chemical agents, food additives, or inadvertent contaminants, or for other such potentially dangerous materials as may occur naturally in foods—according to panelists.

This information could be part of a consolidated national record, which would include provision for storage of samples so that retrospective evaluation can be made as new problems or interests arise. (12)

4. Evaluation of Nutritional Status

Panelists were interested not only in the H.A.N.E.S. survey being conducted by HEW but also in developing special surveys for use in local areas facing specific nutritional problems.

While the national survey ought to reveal the kind and extent of nutritional problems of a national nature—such as obesity and other medically related conditions caused by excessive food consumption as well as deficiency conditions—local surveys could emphasize measurement of the impact of nutrition education in a local program or evaluation of dietary habits unique to a particular population.

The panelists also noted that a great deal of data is already collected by primary care practitioners from their patients. Doctors, clinics, school health programs, and other local activities routinely obtain data of value in monitoring national nutritional status. If methods of insuring confidentiality could be developed, existing medical records could be an invaluable addition to the national data bank on nutrition.

B. Nutrition Education

The vital need for improvement of nutrition education has been recognized for some time. It was the first item on the agenda for Nutrition Committee members after the National Nutrition Policy Study hearings ended last June. A bill—the National Nutrition Education Act of 1974 (S.3864)—was introduced last July 31st.

Since the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health in 1969 there have been two major additional conferences and at least one major comprehensive study on nutrition education.

The Conference at Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1972, brought together experts from the Council on Food and Nutrition of the American Medical Association, the Nutrition Foundation, the American Heart Association, and the U.S. Public Health Service, among others.

The other large scale conference, involving 44 dental schools, was held at M.I.T. under Nutrition Foundation sponsorship. (13) In addition to these two conferences, Dr. William Darby, President of the Nutrition Foundation, also reminded panelists about a year-long study by the American Dietetic Association projecting training needs for dietitians for the long-term future. (14)

Dr. Barby expressed his grave disappointment to the Committee that despite this ample documentation of the need for greater support of nutrition education, "...there has not yet been made available to medical and dental schools, funds specifi-

cally for this purpose." (15) Dr. Darby's concern was the crucial link between education and the world food crisis:

> I submit that in the field of food science and technology--an integral portion of which is nutrition--there is a great opportunity for increasing, enhancing, the food supply and the nutritional level of the countries that, at the present time, we consider to be the so-called developing world. It is crucially important, therefore, that we integrate nutrition into the teaching in our departments, universities--our institutions that develop food scientists and technologists. (16)

Unfulfilled Needs in Professional Education for Health Services

The panel concluded that:

> The development of a national food and nutrition policy will require increased numbers of professionally trained people. The numbers and kinds will depend upon the nature of the policy eventually developed. We would insist, however, that the primary aim of such a policy must be the maintenance and improvement of health--the health of all people, affluent as well as the disadvantaged. (17)

and

> The major responsibility must therefore fall upon the health system--physicians, nurses, dietitians, nutritionists, health auxiliaries, etc. The current system transmits precious little nutritional information to physicians who must inevitably occupy a leading role...(18)

Ruby P. Puckett, Director of the Food and Nutrition Services at the J. Hillis Miller Health Center of the University of Florida, pointed out, however, that even though:

> We all agree that physicians should be educated in nutrition; but with the move to reduce the number of years that one attends school to become a physician, it seems more important that the clinical dietitian be the knowledgeable one of the total team in nutrition and food. (19)

Constance McCarthy, Chief of the Public Health Nutrition Service of the Rhode Island School of Public Health argued similarly on behalf of public health nutritionists:

> I am very concerned about the dilution of the scope of public health nutrition services at the federal level....We are finding a drastic decrease in the number of program areas that are being covered by professional nutritionists. (20)

Without taking sides on which profession is "more important"—they are all important—it is clear that there is a consensus on the need for stepped-up nutrition education for a broad range of health professionals.

The panel recommendation expressed this consensus:

> To provide support for training of all health professionals as called for by the Williamsburg Conference. (21)

Unfulfilled Needs of Land-Grant Institutions

The panel concluded:

> The crucial importance of integrating nutrition into food science and technology is evident in view of the increasing industrialization of food production and distribution in all Western countries but especially within the United States and the dependence upon industrial developments in concert with improved practices for meeting world food needs. (22)

But the panel found the present institutions ill-equipped to meet these growing demands. As they put it, the "virtual dearth of well-trained personnel...makes it difficult to meet this challenge and the educational need within these institutions". (23)

They therefore recommended:

> That support continue to be provided for nutrition and health programs in the land-grant institutions with a special emphasis on the development of personnel and programs of "1890" schools.* (24)

Unfulfilled Needs for Teacher Education

For health professionals, food specialists and agricultural scientists to improve the quality of their knowledge of nutrition is only half the problem. Public nutrition education is also needed if new knowledge is to benefit the average citizen.

If the public is to be reached, the educational system is clearly a major institutional vehicle. But, as the panel observed: "The level of understanding of nutrition by a majority of America's teachers is low." (25) The panel attributes this lack of knowledge to:

> Current nutrition education and teaching programs during the formal learning experiences from kindergarten through college are largely ineffective or nonexistent. Frequently what is taught is misleading or unsound. (26)

* Black land grant institutions recently elevated to equality with other land grant institutions by Public Law 89-106

and

> The lack of sound, well-prepared, challenging educational materials and failure to commit school time to nutrition education have limited the health benefits derivable from our abundant wholesome food supply. (27)
>
> The panel recommended:
>
> 1. An intensive national effort to provide nutrition education to teachers in colleges and universities.
>
> 2. Support for in-service and continuing education after graduation.
>
> 3. Support for a series of summer institutes in nutrition and food modeled on the National Science Foundation programs of science teaching institutes.
>
> 4. Utilization of modern multi-media materials and techniques to instruct teachers without prior experience in these fields. (28)

The panel also went on record as favoring Resource and Development Training Centers at selected universities and colleges.

National Nutrition Education Act

The response by the Committee to these suggestions was the National Nutrition Education Bill of 1974. In introducing this legislation, Committee Chairman George McGovern (D-South Dakota) observed:

> This bill represents the first legislative action taken directly from the recommendations of the National Nutrition Policy hearings held this June by the Nutrition Committee. (29)
>
> In his floor remarks, Senator McGovern observed:
>
> At the present time there is no comprehensive legislation which allows for the teaching of nutrition education in the nation's schools. We feed 25 million children a day in the School Lunch Program, but we do not take advantage of that opportunity by educating them at the same time as to food choices, dietary habits and nutrient content...(30)

C. Nutrition Research

In terms of government policy, the highest priority in nutrition research ought to be development of better, cheaper and more reliable methods for measuring nutritional status. The National Nutrition Surveillance System proposed in this report would necessitate development of such instruments if the concept is ever to become operational.

Our present weaknesses in this area should not, however, be used as a rationalization for delay of comprehensive and realistic policies which can be instituted now, without further research.

We must simultaneously act on the best information we have while acquiring better techniques of assessment for the future.

The panel also suggested other important research priorities:

Increased understanding of nutritional requirements;

Better information on the effects of malnutrition;

Research into the impact of changing patterns of food consumption;

Better understanding of the relationship of economic and social problems on nutrition problems; and

Better understanding of basic metabolism. (31)

The panel argued that such research could only come through support of training programs for research personnel, and significant increases in research funding. (32)

The Department of Agriculture prepared a special report for use by the panel and the Nutrition Committee outlining some of the major arguments for substantial nutrition research efforts:

> First, major health problems are diet-related. USDA observed that "most of the health problems underlying the leading causes of death in the United States could be modified by improvements in the diet." (32)
>
> Second, the real potential from improved diet is preventive. While data supplied to the Committee precludes quantifying the potential benefits, virtually all clinicians and nutritionists consulted were convinced that improved diet could defer or modify the severity of many disease conditions. But these same experts observed that present research has emphasized the food needs of normal persons, suggesting that a major change in thrust might be appropriate if the full benefits of this knowledge were to be obtained. (33)
>
> Third, everybody would benefit from such research. Not everyone gets cancer or heart disease. But everyone eats. Basic research into diet, nutrient requirements and other basic knowledge would benefit people of all ages, regions of the country and economic status. To the extent that research helps the homemaker cut costs without cutting out essentials, such research could even save people money.

> Fourth, the benefits are long range. We do not yet fully understand the relationship of diet to health. It is likely that minor changes in food habits instituted at an early age might well avoid serious changes later on in life. One intriguing indication of the possible ecology of food and society is the following:
>
> The highest death rate areas generally correspond to those where agriculturalists have recognized the soil as being depleted for several years. This suggests a possible relationship between submarginal diets and the health of succeeding generations. (34)

In addition to these four major arguments for nutrition research, panelists at the hearings expressed two other concerns:

1. Present research lacks coordination.

2. Food fortification concepts should receive more field testing.

The panel also appeared to resent the present lack of emphasis given to nutrition concerns in National Science Foundation sponsored programs. Panelists believed the NSF could perform a much more aggressive coordinating role in facilitating a comprehensive program of research for the nation in the area of nutrition.

The staff shares the view of the panel about the need for new priorities, but concludes that greater federal financial support is more urgent than organizational restructuring at the present time.

There is an important relationship, nonetheless, between the need for more research and the proposals contained in this report. Essentially, the development of a National Nutrition Plan, with its requirement of goals and objectives which are ranked according to importance will provide the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, as well as the Department of Agriculture, a better basis for evaluating grant proposals.

Under our proposed National Nutrition Plan it will be possible to integrate the entire federal nutrition research effort into a single coherent focus. The time, intelligence and resources of the scientific community will be harnessed to promote the health of the American people through improved understanding of nutrition.

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PREFACE

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Toward a National Nutrition Policy

The past year may represent a turning point in history. Numerous developments including the energy crisis, inflation, rising food costs and depletion of our food reserves have convinced many knowledgable people that we are now entering an era which will be characterized by a shortage of resources including food. The high energy cost of producing food makes it clear that food and the energy supply are inextricably linked. For the first time, the capacity of the United States to feed itself and meet its world food commitments is being seriously questioned. A world food crisis exists at this time, and this will have serious repercussions in this country.

The first requirement of a food supply is that it provide a nutritionally adequate diet for the population. We must first supply what we need even if we cannot supply what we want.

New attitudes, priorities, and a restructuring of responsible governmental agencies and their programs will be required if we are to deal effectively with food and nutrition problems that we face now and in the future. We must create the social and political climate which will make this possible and this will be a complex process. This statement on a national nutrition policy by the National Nutrition Consortium indicates the essential components of such a policy and we urge that action be taken now to initiate its development.

D. Mark Hegsted
Chairman, Board of Directors

April 1974

FOREWORD

Governments are established in order that man, through his collective efforts, may fulfill his needs for survival and security; and, with increasing affluence, enjoy the benefits and comforts that arise from shared abundance. To accomplish this, high priority must be given to protection of the individual by assuring him the best opportunity of procuring and utilizing food to fulfill his basic needs.

The costs of meeting these needs and the level of abundance at which they are fulfilled vary with the socioeconomic, cultural, and technologic level of a particular society. Indeed, these features are everchanging as a society evolves from its early primitive structure—concerned primarily with survival and security—to the complex, technologically developed, affluent organization as currently exists in North American and European countries. In these latter societies, the majority of the population is concerned with maintaining the standards of health, comfort, convenience and enjoyment that are unattainable by less developed societies. Governments of the highly developed societies have recognized new responsibilities of food supply, quality assurance and health protection that arise with developing technology.

Large-scale technological production of foodstuffs has created unique circumstances that require new systems of regulations and monitoring; and new understanding by the public in order to attain maximum benefits with minimal risks.

From the founding of this Government, in 1776 to the present, the United States has grown from a population of 3 million to over 200 million. The high standard of living and level of health of the Nation are results of technologic development. The technologic application of science in agriculture makes it possible for less than 4 percent of the population to produce the abundant agricultural supply of this Nation—in striking contrast to the earlier situation, and that pertaining today in developing countries, where 60 percent to 80 percent of the population are engaged in agriculture with living and health standards in marked contrast to those of the United States.

Accordingly, a concise statement of a National Nutrition Policy is timely and desirable. The National Nutrition Consortium—representing four major scientific and professional societies,[1] the membership of which have responsibilities for developing, through research, new knowledge in nutrition and food science in relation to man's needs for health—has addressed itself to preparation of guidelines for

[1] The American Institute of Nutrition, The American Society for Clinical Nutrition, The American Dietetic Association, and The Institute of Food Technology. The organizations have a combined membership of approximately 40,000 scientifically trained professionals.

a National Nutrition Policy. These are presented in order to identify the many considerations to be brought into focus in effective long-range governmental planning and implementation of programs for foods and nutrition in relation to the Nation's health and other national responsibilities.

I. Need for a Stated National Nutrition Policy

A stated National Nutrition Policy is needed to ensure that food will be available to provide an adequate diet at a reasonable cost to every person within the United States. Food to provide good nutrition is a fundamental need of every member of society. In order that he may utilize food to greatest benefit, the individual must have some basic understanding of food and nutrition in relation to requirements for health—including information concerning the products which he purchases.

Nutrient *requirements* of the population should be defined and translated into terms of food in developing plans for food production at the agricultural and manufacturing level. The nutritional contribution of foods as well as their economic importance must receive consideration. Agricultural and nutritional policies should be coordinated. The production of sufficient food to fulfill the needs of all segments of the population must be accompanied by an adequate distribution system. The quality and safety of the food supply must be assured by quality control of production and by regulatory controls and surveillance.

A National Nutrition Policy is needed to fulfill our commitments as a Nation—in cooperation with other nations and international organizations—in planning and devising measures for provision of adequate food for the expanding world population. This includes the maintenance of adequate world reserves of food, provision of technical assistance to developing nations, participation in world trade and assistance in provision of foods in emergency situations are important aspects of international nutrition responsibilities.

II. Goals of a National Nutrition Policy

The goals of a National Nutrition Policy should be to:

1. Assure an adequate wholesome food supply at reasonable cost to meet the needs of all segments of the population. This supply to be available at a level consistent with the affordable lifestyle of the era.
2. Maintain food resources sufficient to meet emergency needs; and to fulfill a responsible role as a Nation in meeting world food needs.
3. Develop a level of sound public knowledge and responsible understanding of nutrition and foods that will promote maximal nutritional health.
4. Maintain a system of quality and safety control that justifies public confidence in its food supply.
5. Support research and education in foods and nutrition with adequate resources and reasoned priorities to solve important current problems and to permit exploratory basic research.

III. Measures To Attain Goals

To attain these goals, it is essential to:

1. Maintain surveillance of the nutritional status of the population and determine the nature of nutritional problems observed.
2. Develop programs within the health care system that will prevent and rectify nutritional problems.
3. Assist the health professions in coordinated efforts to improve the nutritional status of the population through the life cycle.
4. Develop programs for nutrition education for both health professionals and the general public.
5. Identify areas in which nutrition knowledge is inadequate, and foster research to provide this knowledge.
6. Assemble information on the food supply—including food production and distribution—and provide a nutritional input in the regulation of foreign agricultural trade.
7. Determine the nutrient composition of foods and promote and monitor food quality and safety.
8. Cooperate with other nations and international agencies in developing measures for solving the world's food and nutrition problems.

IV. Programs Needed To Meet Objectives

Seven major phases are needed; they are:

1. The nutritional status of all segments of the United States population should be monitored continuously with periodic national reporting of:
   a. the prevalence of specific nutritional problems;
   b. the effects of various preventive and remedial programs on nutritional status and on prevalence of nutritional problems; and,
   c. food consumption of various population groups.
2. Nutrition programs should be established and expanded in the Health Care system, giving consideration to the following points:
   a. Maintenance of good nutrition in all segments of the population should be promoted through Health Care Centers—clinics, hospitals, neighborhood centers—which should be responsible for nutritional diagnosis and counselling. Good nutritional practices should be an integral part of services in nursing homes, day care centers, orphanages, prisons and other institutions.
   b. Alleviation of malnutrition in disadvantaged groups is of high priority. These groups include the poor, those at high risk, infants, pregnant women, the elderly, migrant workers and other minority groups. Programs may include food stamps, commodity distribution, food supplements, and school feeding programs.
   c. The prevention and therapy of nutritional problems is a *continuing* public health responsibility. Current problems include anemia, obesity, delayed growth and development of

children, mild or potential vitamin deficiencies, and nutritional problems related to a wide variety of disease states such as coronary artery disease, malabsorption syndromes and other gastrointestinal disorders, inborn errors of metabolism, diabetes, allergic conditions and renal disease.

d. Programs should include provision of a nutrition component in all Health Care Centers in all geographic areas. Nutrition services should be under the direction—at some level—of a professional with competence in nutrition or dietetics.

Provision of nutrition services should be included in plans for benefits provided by National Health Insurance.

e. Nutrition centers of excellence for diagnosis, treatment, research and training should be established in various parts of this country.

3. Nutrition information should be incorporated into all levels of formal education.

a. In schools: Nutrition should be a basic curriculum requirement in all elementary schools and high schools.

The School Lunch Program should be used to assist in nutrition education through correlation with teaching in the classroom.

All teachers should receive training in nutrition.

Courses in nutrition should be available in colleges and universities.

b. Training of nutrition professionals and paraprofessionals, physicians, dietitians, public health nutritionists, dentists, nurses, veterinarians, social workers, physical education teachers and health educators should have high priority. Both undergraduate and postgraduate training is needed, as well as continuing education.

Medical schools should be encouraged to establish faculty and resources for teaching nutrition in clinical as well as preclinical departments; and nutrition training and services should be promoted in hospitals and clinics.

The Land Grant Universities should continue and expand training in the areas of food and nutrition.

c. Sound nutrition information for the general public should be carried out through all components of the communications media—including Federal, State and local departments of education, cooperative State Extension Services, colleges and universities, community agencies, industry and the mass media.

Food labeling and food advertising can contribute significantly to nutrition knowledge. Labeling and advertising regulations should require presentation of truthful nutrition information in all instances where nutritional claims are made.

Nutrition education can be incorporated in such programs as the Food Stamp Program and in supplementary feeding programs.

4. Nutrition research should be supported at all levels. Basic and applied research in nutrition are both essential for solving current and future problems.

Research should be supported in colleges and universities, in nutrition centers of excellence, in health care facilities, in special institutes, in industry and in the Federal agencies. Support for training of nutrition scientists to conduct such research should have high priority.

Among the agencies with responsibilities for nutrition-related research are the Food and Drug Administration, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, the Veterans' Administration, the Department of Commerce and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Research support should be provided for all areas of food production, processing and use.

The experiment stations in the 50 States have responsibilities for research in both food science and experimental nutrition. Food science and human nutrition deserve especially high priorities.

Coordination of nutrition research activities among all departments and divisions of the government is highly desirable.

5. Food production and distribution in the United States and in other parts of the world should be considered from the standpoint of nutritional policy.

Increased agricultural production should be encouraged, including greater yields, and development of new genetic types of food with improved nutrient content.

More beneficial distribution of foods should be planned.

Food reserves should be established and maintained.

Priorities in international trade in agricultural commodities should be planned to make the best use of supplies to meet the needs in the United States and in developing countries of the world.

6. Nutrient composition, quality and safety of foods deserve continuous study and assessment.

The development of wholesome new foods such as formulated, fabricated and convenience foods, as well as the fortification of foods should be encouraged.

Informative food labeling can aid in educating the consumer in nutrition, and can assist him in his choice of foods, so that a good diet can be obtained.

Research in food science and technology has an important role in the total nutrition program and is a responsibility of Government, as well as of industry and academic institutions.

Regulation of food quality and safety is an essential aspect of a National Nutrition Program. Periodic review of regulatory controls permits changes as needed.

Research in all aspects of the quality and safety of foods should receive high priority.

7. Programs to fulfill the responsibilities of the United States as a Nation to other countries, in cooperation with national and international agencies, should be a permanent part of the Nation's policy.

In view of the high prevalence of malnutrition throughout the developing countries of the world and the rapidly expanding population, the critical areas are:

population control and family planning;
food production;
food science and technology;
economic development;
knowledge of nutritional science and applied nutrition;
social and cultural changes; and,
education.

These areas require financial support and technical assistance by this country, other developed nations and international groups, industry, foundations, philanthropic organizations and private citizens.

V. Requirements To Establish and Effectively Implement

An effective plan for establishing and implementing a National Nutrition Policy should provide for the following:

1. Formation of a food and nutrition policy board at a high level in the Government.

2. Establishment of an Office of Nutrition or a National Nutrition Center to develop plans and programs for implementation of a National Nutrition Policy.

An Advisory Nutrition Council or Board composed of representatives of various organizations with special competence in dealing with food and nutrition problems should be formed to advise the Office of Nutrition (National Nutrition Center) in planning and evaluating a National Nutrition Program.

Responsibilities and activities of the Office of Nutrition (National Nutrition Center) should include:

a. Identification and coordination of food and nutrition programs in various governmental agencies.

b. Provision for continuing food and nutrition surveillance.

This should include: (1) monitoring of the food supply; (2) continuing general surveys of the nutritional status of the population; (3) in-depth studies of specific public health problems related to nutrition; and, (4) continuing accumulation of information relative to food consumption and food composition.

Some or all of these activities could be assigned to appropriate organizations or agencies.

The surveillance system should be designed to utilize not only survey sources but also centers of health services and education, monitoring efforts of Federal and State government agencies, health insurance programs and similar sources of reliable information.

c. Establishment of a nutrition information service.

Nutrition resources and programs for information gathering at State and local levels should be supported and strengthened. State and local nutrition offices should be incorporated into a nationally coordinated nutrition information service.

d. Periodic evaluation of nutrition policy and program.

3. Development of centers of excellence for food and nutrition research and for the diagnosis and treatment of nutritional health problems.

4. Establishment of programs for the support of extramural research and education in universities, research institutes and similar organizations—including special support for centers of excellence in research and education in human nutrition.

5. Development of programs and resources to encourage, nationwide, the incorporation of sound information concerning foods and nutrition into public school education at all levels from preschool through high school, college and university curricula, and into materials used by the communications media.

Broad support should be provided for teaching nutrition in health professional schools—medical, dental, public health and allied health professions—and in colleges of teacher education.

6. Coordination of international aspects of the National Nutrition Program with the Agency for International Development, international programs of other branches of the Federal Government, also with international agencies such as the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization and others.

Finally, the National Nutrition Consortium urges responsible officials and Members of the Congress to consider such policy as a whole, and give appropriate priorities to necessary legislation and funding.

○